

**PLEASE NOTE:**

- While the application below focuses on Census Tract 5104, it is the Town's intention to use these assessment funds on a community-wide basis, as is allowed by EPA.
- Specific companies named in the application were mentioned only as examples of the types of suspected brownfields in Town. The Town has not made any investigation or determination regarding potential contamination at these sites.

## **1. COMMUNITY NEED**

### **a. Targeted Community & Brownfields**

#### ***i. Targeted Community Description***

The Town of East Hartford is applying for a \$200,000 Brownfields Community-wide Assessment Grant. The targeted area for this application is Census Tract 5104, a designated low-to-moderate income census tract. The Town has never received a Brownfields grant.

East Hartford is predominantly a residential community consisting of a variety of subdivisions containing either exclusively single-family homes and/or two-family homes. Several pockets of apartment complexes and publicly assisted housing developments are located in East Hartford, which add density and housing choice within an overall suburban setting.

Single-family homes comprise the greatest percentage of the town's land use. In fact, of the town's total land area of almost 12,000 acres (18.8 square miles), about 30% is developed as detached single-family homes, with an additional 7% developed in other residential uses, bringing the total land in East Hartford dedicated to residential use to nearly 38%.

With only 12% of total land area vacant, very little development can be expected to occur on raw, undeveloped land. Furthermore, the 12% figure does not take into consideration the physical development constraints found on many vacant properties, such as wetlands, floodplains or steep slopes. If these potential constraints are accounted for in the calculation of vacant land, it is estimated that about one-half of the vacant land would be developable, accounting for just 6% of the town's total land area.

This severe lack of developable land makes it imperative for East Hartford to focus commercial and industrial development on parcels already designated for those purposes. The declining amount of vacant land in the Town dictates that future growth will need to involve reuse of properties already designated as commercial and/or industrial.

Census Tract 5104, also generally referred to as the Burnside Avenue Corridor, can be viewed as a microcosm of the commercial, industrial and civic life of East Hartford. The Tract's western boundary includes a one mile stretch of Main Street that is essentially the Town's central, downtown thoroughfare. This section also includes several municipal buildings, including the Town Library and Town Hall. The northern boundary consists of a set of railroad tracks, and immediately to the south of the tracks lays Tolland Street which, in combination with nearby Burnside Avenue, makes up one of the Town's main industrial and commercial areas.

The eastern boundary of 5104 lies just to the east of East Hartford Middle School, and also contains St. Rose Church and a police and fire station. The southern boundary of the Census Tract is predominantly the Hockanum River.

North of the Hockanum River and south of a residential neighborhood lies the Town landfill. Located just one mile from the East Hartford Landfill is the YWCA-sponsored East Hartford Early Learning and Childcare Center at 9 Signor Street. The Center offers programs related to school readiness-funded preschool to income-qualified families.

**ii. Demographic Information**

Demographically, there are two Connecticut: one that encompasses those who live in “the wealthiest state in the nation,” and the other which includes residents who live in some of the most severe and concentrated pockets of poverty in the nation. As displayed below, the Town of East Hartford, and Census Tract 5104 in particular, fall squarely in the latter. East Hartford compares unfavorably with the United States in unemployment, poverty rate and median household income, and has a 40 percent greater minority population.

<b>Demographic Table</b>				
	<b>Census Tract 5104</b>	<b>Town of East Hartford</b>	<b>Connecticut Statewide</b>	<b>National</b>
<b>Population:</b>	5,659 <sup>1</sup>	51,252 <sup>1</sup>	3,574,097 <sup>1</sup>	308,745,538 <sup>1</sup>
<b>Unemployment:</b>	15.8% <sup>3</sup>	9.5% <sup>2</sup>	6.6% <sup>2</sup>	6.7% <sup>2</sup>
<b>Poverty Rate:</b>	28.2% <sup>3</sup>	15.3% <sup>3</sup>	10.0% <sup>3</sup>	11.8% <sup>3</sup>
<b>Percent Minority:</b>	67.0% <sup>1</sup>	48.7% <sup>1</sup>	22.4% <sup>1</sup>	26.7% <sup>1</sup>
<b>Median Household Income</b>	\$33,398 <sup>3</sup>	\$48,438 <sup>3</sup>	\$69,519 <sup>3</sup>	\$51,371 <sup>3</sup>
<b>Residential Property Value below \$100K (owner occpd.)</b>	36.4% <sup>3</sup>	11.2% <sup>3</sup>	5.0% <sup>3</sup>	24.5% <sup>3</sup>
<sup>1</sup> Data are from the 2010 U.S. Census data and is available at <a href="http://www.census.gov/">http://www.census.gov/</a> . <sup>2</sup> Data are from the Bureau of Labor Statistics and is available at <a href="http://www.bls.gov">www.bls.gov</a> <sup>3</sup> Data are from the American Community Survey is available on American FactFinder at <a href="http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/tableservices/isf/pages/productview.xhtml">http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/tableservices/isf/pages/productview.xhtml</a>				

More striking is the comparison between Census Tract 5104 and the State of Connecticut. The poverty rate in 5104 is more than twice that of Connecticut, and the national average. This is also reflected in the measurement of median household income, where the residents of 5104 earned less than half of the overall Connecticut income. Also, more than 35 % of residences in Census Tract 5104 are valued below \$100,000, compared with just 5% in the state.

**iii. Brownfields**

As with many northeastern municipalities, East Hartford has no shortage of environmentally-impaired properties. There are currently 19 properties within Census Tract 5104 that appear on the State of Connecticut’s List of Contaminated or Potentially Contaminated Sites, including dry cleaners, oil companies and auto repair shops. East Hartford is also one of only 13 of Connecticut’s 169 municipalities with seven or more documented brownfield sites, two of them located within Census Tract 5104. East Hartford’s brownfields include former manufacturing facilities, auto body shops, petroleum storage facilities, and abandoned warehouses. Specific examples of contaminated or possibly contaminated sites within the Census Tract 5104 include:

**Standard Welding** – This one-acre metal shop at 212 Prospect Street is one of the confirmed brownfields in the target area. The primary airborne contaminant found in arc welding is welding fume. Welding fume is a complex mixture of very small particles of metal oxides. The specific components depend on the composition of the welding electrode (stick, wire or filler rod), base metal, surface coatings and the type of shielding gas or flux. When electrode coatings, fluxes,

shielding gases and surface coatings are burned or exposed to ultraviolet arc rays, they can generate potentially harmful gases, such as carbon monoxide, ozone, nitrogen oxides, and phosgene.

**Clayton Motors** – This is a 1.1 acre body shop located at 300 Connecticut Boulevard that is the other confirmed Brownfield in the target area. Potential contaminants include waste oils; solvents; acids; paints; automotive wastes and miscellaneous cutting oils.

**Connecticut Cleaners** – This is a dry cleaning company that opened in 1929. Located at 98-100 Burnside Ave., it is a .43 acre site with a 5446 sq. ft. building area. Dry cleaning establishments are likely to contain Perchloroethylene, or Perc, a significantly toxic chemical that is difficult to remove from the environment and, over time, degrades into a potent carcinogen.

#### ***iv. Cumulative Environmental Issues***

According to the U.S. Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR), communities with multiple Brownfields tend to have multiple public health issues. The issues include increased potential for exposures to harmful chemicals, lack of green space or areas for recreation, decreased access to healthy foods, poor air quality, contaminated soil or water, and elevated blood lead levels or asthma prevalence, among others.

The brownfield-related concerns for Census Tract 5104 are exacerbated by a number of health and environmental challenges in the area. The Town of East Hartford continues to deal with issues that arise out of its landfill (located in Census Tract 5104), most notably the presence of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs). Under a consent order issued by the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP), the Town of East Hartford closed and capped its landfill in October 2001. To date, the Town has been unsuccessful in securing funds to perform needed PCB remediation at the site. The current cost estimate for this work is \$5.9 million.

In addition, recreational activities are currently prohibited on the East Hartford section of the Hockanum River (located within Census Tract 5104) due to exceedances of the state water quality standard for E coli. The banned recreational uses include swimming, boating, fishing, and others.

Traffic also affects East Hartford's air quality. Three major highways intersect East Hartford: Interstates 91 and 84 and State Route 2. According to the CT Dept. of Transportation, I-84 carries about 166,400 vehicles per day (15% trucks) through East Hartford. I-91 carries 158,000 vehicles per day (9.1% trucks) through Hartford, less than ½ mile across the river from East Hartford.

The cumulative effect of all these sources of pollution raises serious environmental justice concerns, as Census Tract 5104 clearly bears a disproportionate share of the negative environmental consequences resulting from industrial, governmental and commercial operations or policies. The Brownfields assessment funding would be an important step toward alleviating this burden.

#### **b. Impacts on Targeted Community**

The types of contamination at the Brownfields sites described have a severe negative effect on residents' health within Census Tract 5104. According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) health impacts from exposure to welding fumes include flu-like symptoms, dyspnea (breathing

difficulty), cough, muscle pain, fever and chills. Similar concerns surround the contaminants routinely found in automotive body shops.

The CDC has also found that repeated exposure to high levels of Perc can irritate the skin, eyes, nose and mouth, and can cause liver damage and respiratory failure. The health effects of breathing in air or drinking water with low levels of Perc are not yet known.

The serious health impacts of Brownfields in East Hartford and 5104 is borne out by the statistics concerning asthma. According to a Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH) report, East Hartford ranks in the top 7 percent of Connecticut towns with the highest asthma hospitalization rates. It ranks 13th out of 169 towns for the highest asthma hospitalization rates between 2005 and 2009, and ranks 11th out of 169 towns for the most asthma-related Emergency Department visits during the same period.

All of these contaminations can have a severe negative affect on all area residents, but particularly on vulnerable populations such as children and the elderly.

### **c. Financial Need**

#### ***i. Economic Conditions***

As reflected in the demographic table above, the Town of East Hartford and Census Tract 5104 in particular severely trail the state and nation in recovering from the recent recession. The Town of East Hartford has been designated a “Distressed Municipality” by the State of Connecticut. State statutes define distressed municipalities cities or towns suffering from “high unemployment and poverty, aging housing stock and low or declining rates of growth in job creation, population, and per capita income.” (Connecticut General Statutes Section 32-9p) East Hartford is in the bottom 11 percent of Connecticut municipalities when measured against this standard.

According to a February 8, 2012 article in the Hartford Courant, the most recent property valuation in East Hartford showed the town's total taxable property declined from 2010 to 2011 by almost 13 percent, or \$396,873,828. This sharp decline in tax revenue means that essential Town services such as education and public safety take up a larger percentage of general fund revenue, leaving very little for proactive initiatives such as Brownfields assessment.

East Hartford has also been hit hard by the movement of jobs out of the industrial Northeast and into the South, West and overseas. The Town’s largest employer is Pratt & Whitney Aircraft, now a division of United Technologies Corporation. The past 30 years has seen a dramatic reduction in staff at the in East Hartford facility, from a peak of about 17,000 hourly employees in East Hartford and its sister facility in Middletown, CT, to today’s figure of about 1,350 employees at each site.

Since 2011, East Hartford has also been battered by Presidentially-declared disasters that have caused significant economic disruption, from Hurricane Irene in 2011 to Hurricane Sandy in 2012. The worst of these events was a freak October snowstorm in 2011 that knocked out power to 96 percent of the Town. More than a week after the storm, several parts of town were still without power, causing losses of business and productivity to many East Hartford employers.

## **ii. Economic Effects of Brownfields**

A 2009 EPA-funded study of the economic impact of Brownfields redevelopment “*Verifying the Social, Environmental, and Economic Promise of Brownfield Programs*,” found that Brownfields have a negative impact on property values and brownfield redevelopment has a positive effect.

This positive effect is desperately needed in East Hartford and in Census Tract 5104 in particular. As shown in the demographic table on page 3, more than 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of the residential, owner-occupied properties in Census Tract 5104 are valued at \$100,000 or lower. This is more than 3 times the number of like properties in the Town of East Hartford and more than 7 times the number in Connecticut as a whole. An August, 2012 Working Paper by the Nicholas Institute for Environmental Policy Solutions at Duke University titled “*Estimating the Impacts of Brownfield Remediation on Housing Property Values*” found that residential property values can rise from 5.1% - 12.8% near Brownfield sites when cleanup is completed.

The presence of a high number of contaminated properties is also an obvious disincentive to attracting businesses East Hartford, but what is less obvious is the effect of other Brownfields programs in Central Connecticut. As stated earlier, East Hartford is largely built-out, leaving it at a severe disadvantage to bordering towns such as Manchester, South Windsor and Glastonbury, which have had tremendous success in fostering economic and commercial development on previously vacant land.

But the Town faces a different form of competition from its neighbor to the east, the City of Hartford. Because Hartford has operated several successful Brownfields projects, it now has several cleaned up parcels to offer to developers. Thus, not only is East Hartford at a disadvantage against towns with open land, its lack of Brownfields funding puts it at a disadvantage against Hartford. In short, if a developer has a choice between Hartford, with its numerous assessed and/or cleaned up industrial sites and East Hartford, which has never had EPA funding to perform Brownfields assessments, it really is no choice at all.

## **2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION & FEASIBILITY OF SUCCESS**

### **a. Project Description**

#### **i. Project Description**

If successful in this application for funding, the Town plans to perform a community-wide Brownfields Inventory (approximately \$10,000), five Phase I ESAs (approximately \$3,000 apiece) and three Phase II ESAs (approximately \$50,000 apiece). As a low-to-moderate income area with a number of industrial sites, the targeted community, Census Tract 5104, will have priority status in the selection of properties to be assessed.

This project aligns with both the Town’s recently-completed Plan of Conservation Development (POCD) and the Burnside Avenue Corridor Conceptual Development Plan and Implementation Strategy. The POCD endeavors to reflect East Hartford’s place within shifting regional and national trends with significant implications for planning efforts, focusing on key priorities such as population and housing diversity, commercial corridors, jobs, sustainability strategies and quality of life. Two of the overarching goals of the Plan are to promote future development efforts which

provide new housing, recreation, business and employment opportunities, and to support quality-of-life improvements.

The Town is requesting these assessment funds as a means to achieving these goals in Census Tract 5104 and other areas of the Town. One of the opportunities identified in the POCD that is particularly relevant for the 5104 neighborhood is keeping and supporting existing businesses. Many of these enterprises may wish to expand but cannot find the right space to suit their needs, or struggle with the legal and contractual hurdles involved in expansion into new, larger facilities. Brownfields assessment funding would help clear these hurdles and facilitate redevelopment of strategic areas with warehouses and other retrofitted space that meets the needs of businesses seeking to expand or relocate.

This project also aligns well with the Burnside Avenue Corridor Conceptual Development Plan and Implementation Strategy, developed in 1997. Though dated, the Plan’s focus on stabilizing a district that serves as a gateway to the core of East Hartford remains relevant today. It calls for a comprehensive targeting of resources toward the area, guided by the active involvements of its residents and property owners.

**ii. Project Timing**

The planned timeline for the project can be found below. While aggressive, this project calendar will leave Year Three of the cooperative agreement as available time to absorb the delays that are inevitable in this type of project.

<b>East Hartford Brownfields Project Timeline – April, 2015 through April 2017</b>		
<b>Project Activity</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>
Execute Cooperative Agreement	Apr 2015	Town, EPA
Kickoff Community Meetings*	May – Jun 2015	Town, Community Partners
Develop & Advertise Inventory RFP	Jul 2015	Town, EPA
Award Inventory Contract to QEP**	Aug 2015	Town, QEP,
Gain Site Access, Perform Inventory	Sep – Oct 2015	Town, QEP
Review Inventory, Select Phase I sites	Nov 2015	Town, QEP, EPA, Community Partners
Develop Phase I RFP	Dec 2015	Town, QEP, DEEP
Advertise Phase I RFP, Award Contract	Jan – Mar 2016	Town, QEP, LEP***, EPA
Phase Is Performed	Apr – Jul 2016	LEP
Review Phase Is, Prioritize Sites	Aug 2016	Town, LEP, EPA, Community Partners
Develop Phase II RFP	Sep 2016	Town, LEP
Advertise Phase II RFP, Award Contract	Oct – Dec 2016	Town, LEP
Phase IIs Performed	Jan – Mar 2017	LEP
Project Closeout	Apr 2017	Town, LEP, EPA

*\*Community meetings will be held on a quarterly basis throughout the grant. Only the kickoff meetings are listed in the timeline due to space considerations.*

*\*\*QEP = Qualified Environmental Professional*

*\*\*\*LEP = Licensed Environmental Professional. See page 11 for program description.*

Sites will be prioritized and selected based upon input gathered during quarterly community meetings, the results of the Brownfields inventory and accessibility of site. Site access will be secured via mutual agreement between property owners and the Town. If agreements cannot be reached, the Town retains the option of accessing sites through its statutory authority to access private property for the purpose of environmental assessment if back taxes are owed, or if there is a suspected building or health code violation.

The Town will track the progress of the grant over the three year period and measure its success. In addition to providing EPA with quarterly reports and reporting measures (including data entry into the ACRES system), the Town will have other indicators by which to measure program progress including but not limited to the following:

- Neighborhood meetings held and attendance
- Site Assessments completed, Phase I and IIs
- Community outreach, educational brochures
- Partnerships formed with community members, groups and state agencies
- Greenspace projects
- Sites redeveloped
- Private investment into the sites

### ***iii. Site Selection***

Citizen and resident input will play a leading role in the site selection process by soliciting information and opinions from attendees at the quarterly community meetings. The Town will consult with several outside groups, including community partners such as the East Hartford Chamber of Commerce, Goodwin College and the East Hartford YMCA to gain their insights into the selection of the sites with the most redevelopment potential. The site selection will include, but not be limited to the following criteria:

- Ability to gain access to a property
- Status of the tax payments to the Town
- Greenspace creation and preservation
- Proximity of the site to transportation and other existing infrastructure
- Community concerns regarding public health and safety
- Capacity for redevelopment, likelihood of assembling parcels for mixed use development, and implementation of smart-growth principles
- Determination of site eligibility under Federal and State statutes
- Property location
- Status of ownership

Gaining access through the permission of the property owner is the preferred method of gaining access, but if this is not forthcoming, Connecticut state statutes allow municipalities to access private property for the purpose of environmental assessment if back taxes are owed, or if there is a suspected building or health code violation.

## **b. Task Description & Budget Table**

### ***i. Task Description***

**Task One – Community Involvement** – The Town will develop and implement a Community Outreach Plan, whose purpose will be to develop and implement communication strategies that will

address the concerns and needs of the citizens of East Hartford., and those of residents of Census Tract 5104 particularly. Town -wide notification of community meetings concerning the project will be by public notice in the *Hartford Courant* (the largest local daily newspaper) which has a Sunday circulation of over 160,000 readers. Notices will also appear in the *East Hartford Reminder*, a local free publication distributed throughout the Town. Public meeting notices will also be published on the Town’s website in a separate section dedicated to the Town’s Brownfields project. Public meetings will be attended by the Project’s Director and the Environmental Professionals hired to perform the Brownfields inventory and assessment activities.

**Budget:** The \$1,000 in supply costs in the Budget Table (below) relate to the cost of publishing notices, copying of documents and reports and purchase of refreshments for community meetings. \$2,000 in personnel costs in the Budget Table refers to Town staff time spent developing and implementing the Community Outreach Plan and minimal Cooperative Agreement oversight costs.

**ii. Budget Table**

Budget Categories	Project Tasks				Total
	Task 1 Community Involvement	Task 2 Inventory	Task 3 Site Specific Assessments	Task 4 Program Development	
<b>Personnel</b>	\$ 2,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 13,000
<b>Travel</b>				\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000
<b>Supplies</b>	\$ 1,000		\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 3,000
<b>Contractual/ QEP</b>		\$ 10,000			\$ 10,000
<b>Contractual/ LEP</b>			\$ 170,000		\$ 170,000
<b>Total:</b>	\$ 3,000	\$ 13,000	\$ 175,000	\$ 9,000	\$ 200,000

**Task Two – Community-wide Brownfields Inventory** – In partnership with the EPA and DEEP, The Town will develop Request for Proposals (RFP) for a QEP with urban land use planning, community outreach, real estate and marketing, and environmental qualifications. QEP will review Community Outreach Plan; conduct inventory of Brownfield sites; attend community meetings; evaluate site data; utilize site data to develop criteria for prioritizing sites and incorporate data into Town Geographic Information System mapping technology.

**Budget:** \$10,000 in contractual costs refers to agreement with selected QEP to perform the inventory. \$3,000 in personnel costs refer to Town personnel attending community meetings, developing RFP and selecting, supervising and meeting with the QEP.

**Task Three – Site Specific Assessments** – The Town anticipates performing a minimum of five Phase I Environmental Site Assessments (ESAs). From these, the Town anticipates performing three Phase II ESAs. Additional assessments will be performed as funds allow. Requests for Proposals will be developed and issued for individuals and/or firms with a CT DEEP Licensed Environmental Professional (LEP). These requests for proposals will conform to the competitive bidding requirements found in the procurement provisions of the regulations at 40 CFR Parts 30 or 31, as appropriate. The RFP will also solicit evidence of Minority Business Enterprise/Women

Business Enterprise (MBE/WBE) status under MBE/WBE regulations based on 40 CFR Part 33. MBE/WBE status will be one of the factors considered in the evaluation of proposals.

**Budget:** \$170,000 in Contractual costs refers to agreement with selected LEP to conduct five Phase I investigations and three Phase II investigations. \$4,000 in personnel and \$1,000 in supplies costs refer to Town staff time and materials reviewing products of the cooperative agreements, including the Brownfields inventory and Phase I and II ESAs.

**Task Four – Program Development** – Program Development will include oversight of the cooperative agreement, travel to EPA Brownfields conferences and oversight and performance monitoring of all environmental professionals hired by the Town.

**Budget:** \$4,000 in personnel costs and \$1,000 in supplies costs refer to staff oversight of the cooperative agreement and oversight of environmental professionals. \$4,000 in travel costs refer to costs incurred by Town staff attending Brownfields conferences.

### **c. Ability to Leverage**

The Town has been aggressive in seeking grants to address the Brownfields within its borders. Most recently, in October, 2014, East Hartford was awarded \$175,000 funding from the state Office of Brownfield Remediation and Development (OBRD), a dedicated Brownfield Office within the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECED). These funds will be used for the assessment and future demolition of Daley Court, a vacant senior housing complex constructed in 1961 and located inside Census Tract 5104 (see attached letter of commitment).

A grant from the EPA would also help the Town make an even stronger case in applying for more state Brownfields funds OBRD is the official State of Connecticut Brownfield Office and both a financing and technical resource for the Brownfield programs and services the State offers. Such programs include gap financing, seed capital programs, corporate tax credits and environmental liability insurance.

Another potential source of leveraged funds is the Town's annual Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) allocation. The Town receives an annual allocation of approximately \$550,000 in CDBG funding. Funding priorities are developed through public input solicited at several community meetings. The Mayor and Town Council provide their thoughts as well. Because the entirety of Census Tract 5104 is designated a low-to-moderate income area, the ability to address issues in this area with CDBG funds is optimized.

The Town has also recruited East Hartford-based Goodwin College as a project partner and secured its commitment to purchase remediated Brownfield properties that support its strategic plans for the College's expansion from its current location from Riverside Drive to the east toward Main Street (see letter of commitment).

### **3. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & PARTNERSHIPS**

#### **a. Plan for Involving Targeted Community & Other Stakeholders; and Communicating Project Progress**

##### ***i. Community Involvement Plan***

In order to maximize community input, the Town of East Hartford is developing a Community Involvement Plan for the Brownfields assessment program. The purpose of the Plan is to develop and implement communication strategies that will address the concerns and needs of the citizens of East Hartford, particularly those of residents of Census Tract 5104. The residents who are directly or potentially affected by the assessment and possible subsequent remediation of environmental contamination in their neighborhood will be a priority focus of this outreach. This document will outline how the Town has involved and will continue to involve affected residents, local organizations, interested parties and town officials regarding the environmental cleanup at the assessment sites.

Upon the signing of a grant agreement, the Town will initiate a series of community outreach meetings to inform residents about the assessment project. At these meetings, the Town will solicit their views and opinions on the Brownfields in their community, use these views to help guide priorities for site selection, update community members on the progress of the assessment projects, and recruit individuals to serve as community partners for the grant project. The first of these meetings will be held at East Hartford Town Hall, which is located inside the targeted community.

These meetings will be held quarterly throughout the life of the Cooperative Agreement. The Town website will be used to notify citizens about upcoming meetings and to inform them of project progress. Notices regarding all community meetings will run in the Hartford Courant, Connecticut's largest daily newspaper. Notices will also be posted at various locations such as libraries, community centers, public housing complexes and churches. In addition to the meeting at Town Hall, the Town will hold public meetings in different Town neighborhoods (the Chamber of Commerce, Goodwin College and the YMCA have offered to serve as the site of a community meeting). Where appropriate, notices and materials will be translated into Spanish or other languages by the Town's Social Services Department, which provides this service regularly for other Town Departments.

Since the people who live in an area know best what impacts their neighborhood, community input gleaned from these meetings will serve as a starting point for site selection and investigation.

##### ***ii. Communicating Progress***

The Town will use several forms of media to communicate project progress. These include regular updates on the Town Website, a verbal summary of progress to date at each community meeting, and press releases when project milestones are reached. Press releases will be focused on East Hartford's free weekly papers, the *Reminder* and the *Gazette*. These papers are available at no cost at strategic sites around the Town, including Town Hall, the Public Library, the YMCA and the East Hartford Community and Cultural Center. This method of distribution should help the Town reach a low-to-moderate income audience and help inform these citizens about the Brownfields program and how it can positively impact the Town.

## **b. Partnerships with Government Agencies**

### ***i. Local/State/Tribal Environmental Authority***

Because the State of Connecticut has no County-level government, the Town plans to work closely with DEEP to utilize the State of Connecticut's Licensed Environmental Professional (LEP) Program. Section 22a-133v of the Connecticut General Statutes (CGS) established this licensing program for environmental professionals with the intent of facilitating the remediation of contaminated sites in Connecticut.

Under this program, an LEP may investigate and remediate contaminated sites and verify that a parcel has been investigated in accordance with prevailing standards and guidelines and remediated in accordance with the Remediation Standard Regulations.

An eleven-member State Board of Examiners of Environmental Professionals administers the licensing program with support from DEEP staff.

### ***ii. Other Relevant Governmental Partnerships***

As stated earlier, the Town recently received a grant from the state Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) for the assessment and demolition of Daley Court, a vacant senior housing site that was built in the 1960s and is located in Census Tract 5104. The successful completion of this project is viewed as a starting point for the development of a strong relationship between the Town and DECD, proving that Brownfield grant dollars applied to East Hartford and Census Tract 5104 in particular produce real results.

The Town of East Hartford Development Department works closely with the Town's Health Department on its redevelopment projects. As our community becomes informed regarding brownfield sites and the implication these sites have on our health and the environment, we will be able to make informed decisions regarding their redevelopment. The community workshops will identify issues impacting the health of the neighborhoods, particularly those which may have Brownfields next door to homes.

One of the Town's primary partners in Brownfields redevelopment will be the EPA. As stated earlier, members of the Town's staff bring to the project a wealth of experience in working with EPA staff in the implementation and completion of cooperative agreements. This includes a background in using the EPA's Assessment, Cleanup and Redevelopment Exchange System (ACRES), an online database for Brownfields Grantees to electronically submit data directly to EPA.

## **c. Partnerships with Community Organizations**

### ***i. Community Organization Description & Role***

East Hartford has a severe shortage of community organizations, particularly social service groups. In 2012, only one East Hartford-based nonprofit received allocation funds greater than \$5,000 from the United Way of Central and Northeastern Connecticut (according to the group's Form 990 filing with the Internal Revenue Service). That one organization, the Connecticut Rivers Council of the Boy Scouts of America, serves 127 cities and towns in Connecticut, not just East Hartford.

Despite the small number of social service agencies in East Hartford, The Town has been successful in recruiting the support of one of the few that do exist, the East Hartford YMCA. The Y, which is headquartered within Census Tract 5104, has committed to hosting community meetings on the Brownfields project and will serve as a key partner in spreading the word about the project throughout the neighborhood.

The East Hartford Chamber of Commerce has agreed to serve as a partner in the project. The Chamber's mission is to promote the economic and community vitality of the town by partnering with businesses, government, and community groups for the benefit of all of East Hartford.

The Town has also recruited Goodwin College as a community partner. The East Hartford-based College has been active in helping to reduce the number of Brownfields by remediating sites and redeveloping them for campus expansion. Goodwin has pledged to participate by:

- Stabilizing the neighborhood in proximity to the College by purchasing properties and expanding transit-oriented development opportunities that will support its strategic plans for the College's expansion from Riverside Drive to the east toward Main Street;
- Incorporating new open spaces into campus improvements including walking trails, river access and other open space activities; and

#### ***ii. Letters of Commitment***

See attached letters from the East Hartford Chamber of Commerce, Goodwin College and the East Hartford YMCA.

### **4. PROJECT BENEFITS**

#### **a. Health and/or Welfare & Environment**

##### ***i. Health and/or Welfare Benefits***

Brownfield assessment funding will assist the Town of East Hartford to define the risks to health and environment and begin to mitigate them. Comprehensive environmental site investigations will be conducted in accordance with state requirements and guidelines for adequately identifying and characterizing hazardous substances, pollutants, and contaminants of concern. By understanding the exposure pathways and the contaminants in soil and groundwater, appropriate remedies for control of exposure combined with institutional and engineering controls will meet protective levels established by the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection. Thus, assessing these properties will mitigate the threat to human health and the environment.

After the Assessment phase, the eventual abatement or removal from Census Tract 5104 of suspected contaminants like Perc (Connecticut Cleaners), metal oxides (Standard Welding) and automotive wastes (Clayton Motors) can only improve the health of citizens, the attractiveness of residential properties and the economic vitality of businesses within Census Tract 5104.

The assessment projects will also give the Town the opportunity to identify the most contaminated properties inside the target area and determine which should be the primary focus of pre-remediation work, such as fencing a contaminated area to prevent public access.

This is particularly important in the Project's target area, Census Tract 5104, with its relatively young population and the high incidence of asthma. By assessing and eventually cleaning up properties in the target area, there is potential to reduce health impacts of the above contaminants and prevalence of asthma and the many problems that come with them, including numerous hospital visits.

### ***ii. Environmental Benefits***

The ultimate aim of the assessment project is the eventual remediation of Brownfield sites in Census Tract 5104. The main environmental benefit of remediation will be the removal and/or abatement of suspected contaminants such as Perc (Connecticut Cleaners), particles of metal oxides (Standard Welding) and waste oils and solvents (Clayton Motors). A less tangible, but no less important, environmental benefit will be the removal of the stigma of contamination that pervades the Census Tract 5104 area, making the area more attractive for commercial investment.

## **b. Environmental Benefits from Infrastructure Reuse/Sustainable Reuse**

### ***i. Planning, Policies and Other Tools***

The Town of East Hartford supports sustainable development through an integrated approach to planning for land use, transportation, the environment, housing, economic development and infrastructure. The Town's recently-updated Plan of Conservation and Development contains several recommendations geared toward the integration of sustainable reuse principles of its ordinances and land use regulations. These include encouraging features that promote bicycling and walking (i.e. bulb-outs, bike racks, crosswalks, benches, continuous sidewalks, buildings oriented toward the street); encouraging green building practices including the use of pervious pavements, green roofs, rain gardens, and bioswales and requiring on-site stormwater retention.

Recent examples of this commitment to sustainability include a \$12.3 million energy retrofitting project for its facilities, including lighting retrofits, energy management systems, HVAC and burner replacements and pool covers. The Town is also installing arrays of solar panels at four elementary schools, and its Fire Station No. 5 has received LEED® Gold certification from the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC), making it the first such designated fire station in Connecticut.

This commitment to sustainability is critical for Census Tract 5104, where reduction of pollutants can have a tremendous impact on the health and welfare of its residents, especially children. The assessment of the multiple Brownfields in this area is the first step toward bringing green development principles to this area.

### ***ii. Integrating Equitable Development or Livability Principles***

The process of implementing a Brownfields Assessment Cooperative Agreement will assist the Town in fulfilling several equitable development strategies in Census Tract 5104, including:

**Facilitate Meaningful Community Engagement in Planning and Land Use Decisions** – The Community Involvement portion of the Project holds the potential of jump-starting a sense of civic engagement that has been absent in the area. This sense of engagement can carry over into the participation of target-area community leaders in community planning and land use priorities.

**Promote Public Health and a Clean and Safe Environment** – Identification and assessment of Brownfields in the target area are the first steps in the eventual cleanup of contaminated sites and the realization of the public health benefits that come with it. This is particularly important for the

residents of the Target Area, with its higher percentage of residents under 14 and then high incidence of childhood asthma in the community as a whole.

**Strengthen Existing Communities** – The community engagement that can result from the introduction of a Brownfields assessment program can also lead to a sense of empowerment in a community such as Census Tract 5104. This can result in increased community awareness and action on subjects such as blight reduction.

### **c. Economic and Community Benefits**

#### ***i. Economic or Non-Economic Benefits***

As the Town and our citizens faces tax increasing costs and a high property tax burden, redevelopment of brownfield sites will greatly benefit the local economy. Due to the overwhelming reliance on property taxes in Connecticut, our towns and cities are left to compete with each other, and surrounding states, for new or expanding businesses. Assessing and reclaiming contaminated and abandoned properties, and putting them back into productive use, will increase our shovel-ready inventory, and attract much needed jobs and businesses to our town. As the target area for this application, Census Tract 5104 will stand to benefit most from these economic improvements.

The Town anticipates the redevelopment of several brownfield sites will lead to an increase in the tax base, private capital investment in the sites, and job creation. As a Town of primarily residential development, East Hartford places a high priority on these economic benefits to help sustain our tax base for our residents. The Town always encourages incorporation of greenspace as an enhancement of the site as an element of development during site plan review and approval.

#### ***ii. Job Creation Potential: Partnerships with Workforce Development Programs***

The Town works closely with our Regional Workforce Investment Board, Capital Workforce Partners (CWP), in finding employment solutions for job providers and job seekers alike. CWP is responsible for coordinating a regional workforce system that meets the changing employment and training needs of employers and job seekers in support of the economic growth and vitality of the Region. While CWP does not have an environmental job training program, the agency does have the Jobs Funnel, a pre-employment preparation and job training service for Hartford-area residents seeking employment in the construction fields. The Town plans to investigate further the possibility of incorporating this program into its Brownfields redevelopment projects.

## **5. PROGRAMMATIC CAPABILITY & PAST PERFORMANCE**

### **a. Programmatic Capability**

The Chief Elected Official of the Town of East Hartford is Mayor Marcia A. Leclerc. Mayor Leclerc took the oath of office as Mayor of the Town of East Hartford on January 10, 2011 and has been reelected twice. She is a lifelong resident, leader, and champion for the community of East Hartford. Her role in the execution of the cooperative agreement will be to review and give final approval to contracts and agreements related to Brownfields activities.

The Town's Development Director, Eileen Buckheit, will serve as Project Manager. Ms. Buckheit possesses a wealth of experience in the implementation of cooperative agreements with EPA from previous positions. She will provide oversight of the project, which will include the drafting of RFPs, the hiring of contractors, approving quarterly reports to EPA and other activities.

The Town's Grants Manager, Paul O'Sullivan, will serve as Project Administrator, responsible for drafting quarterly reports, and maintaining the project database in ACRES. Mr. O'Sullivan also possesses experience in the implementation of EPA cooperative agreements.

Other Town staff will play supporting roles for the cooperative agreement, including Director of Health and Social Services James Cordier, Town Engineer Denise Horan, Corporation Counsel Scott Chadwick and Finance Director Michael Walsh.

The Town of East Hartford abides by its purchasing procedures as spelled out in Chapter 10 of the Town's Code of Ordinance. If the Town is awarded a Brownfields grant, it will also follow EPA's purchasing requirements and compete contracts for services and products, including consultant contracts, and conduct cost and price analyses, to the extent required by the procurement provisions of the regulations at 40 CFR Parts 30 or 31, as appropriate.

#### **b. Audit Findings**

The Town has not had any adverse audit findings from an OMB Circular A-33 audit, an audit conducted by a federal, state, tribal, or local government inspector general or similar organization, or audits conducted by the U.S. Government Accountability Office.

#### **c. Past Performance and Accomplishments**

##### ***ii. Has Not Received an EPA BF Grant but has Received Other Federal or Non-Federal Assistance Agreements***

###### 1. Purpose and Accomplishments

The Town has a history of compliance with multiple state, federal and private grants. The Town's Grants Administration office currently manages grants totaling over \$9 million. Examples include:

**Aerospace & Defense Manufacturing Institute** – The Town recently completed a \$1.7 million Office of Economic Assistance (OEA) grant in partnership with the Connecticut Center for Advanced Technology (CCAT), to provide planning assistance to address issues created when a major reduction in Department of Defense spending directly and adversely affects a community. The grant resulted in the creation of the Aerospace & Defense Manufacturing Institute, a comprehensive resource for all aspects of aerospace and defense manufacturing.

**McAuliffe Park Pedestrian Bridge** – State-funded grant in the amount of \$230,000 for the design, construction and related costs for a facility providing a pedestrian connection across the railroad tracks separating the Columbus Circle area and McAuliffe Park. The Town is currently working with the state Department of Transportation (DOT) on the design phase of the project.

###### 2. Compliance with Grant Requirements

**Aerospace & Defense Manufacturing Institute** – The Town closed out this grant at the end of 2013. All reporting requirements have been fulfilled to date.

**McAuliffe Park Pedestrian Bridge** – The Town is currently working with the state Department of Transportation (DOT) on the design phase of the project. All reporting requirements have been fulfilled.

