

1. COMMUNITY NEED

a. Target Community and Brownfields

Community and Target Area Descriptions

The City of Rochester is a historically working-class community located in the southeastern Seacoast region of New Hampshire with a population of 29,954.

Rochester has several serious public health concerns. The city has a high rate of usage and overdose deaths from opioids. Data from the New Hampshire Drug Monitoring Initiative's July 2017 report indicates that the City of Rochester experienced 11-25 overdose deaths in 2016, making Rochester one of the top six municipalities in New Hampshire with the highest number of overdose deaths. Data from the Rochester Police Department and community recovery-focused organizations indicate that vacant, neglected downtown properties, such as the proposed Wallace Street project site, often serve as "hide-outs" for people to use heroin and other opioids.

The City of Rochester is also identified by New Hampshire's Healthy Homes and Lead Poisoning Prevention Program as one of the eight "highest risk" communities in the state for housing lead exposure. U.S. Census and American Community Survey data from 2009-2013, referenced in this report, showed that Rochester had the third highest number of children testing at above 10 µg/dL, ranking behind only the considerably larger cities of Nashua and Manchester.

Further, the Wallace Street brownfield site lies within downtown Rochester, which has been identified in several City master plans and action plans as an economically disadvantaged region and one specifically targeted for federal Community Development Block Grant funding. For example, the downtown region meets CDBG activity eligibility requirements based on the downtown qualifying as a slum or blighted area, and data from downtown business organization Rochester Main Street and the City's Community Development Division indicates downtown commercial vacancy rates at about 25%.

The specific census tract in which the Wallace Street brownfield site is located (Block Group 6, Census Tract 843) is a tract where 67% of the population is low to moderate income under U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) guidelines (*i.e.*, 80% or less of the area median income), and there are several residential properties that surround the brownfield site. In comparison, a similar downtown census tract in the neighboring City of Dover (Block Group 1, Census Tract 1) is only 56% low to moderate income, and a similar downtown census tract in the City of Portsmouth (Block Group 1, Census Tract 691) is only 51% low to moderate income.

Demographic Information and Indicators of Need

	Target Area (e.g., census tract)	City of Rochester	Regional (comparison city: Portsmouth, NH)	State	National
Population	1,380	29,954	21,426	1,324,201	316,127,513
Unemployment	---	4.2%	3.5%	2.7%	8.3%
Poverty Rate	14.8%	13.2%	6.6%	5.6%	15.5%
Percent Minority	---	4.3%	10.8%	6.3%	37.8%

Median Household Income	---	\$46,979	\$71,392	\$66,779	\$53,889
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All population data are taken from the 2015 American Community Survey data profile, except for the census tract data which is taken from HUD's ArcGIS map data. State and national unemployment data are taken from the Bureau of Labor Statistics for August 2017. City and regional unemployment data, as well as poverty data, is taken from the New Hampshire Economic & Labor Market Information Bureau data reports from April 2017. State and national poverty rate data are taken from the 2015 American Community Survey data profile. Target area poverty rate data are taken from the HUD 2015 qualified census tracts map tool. All percent minority data and median household income data are taken from the 2015 American Community Survey data profile.

As displayed in the table above, the City of Rochester demonstrates several indicators of financial need. While 8.9% of the overall state of New Hampshire's population lives in poverty, 13.5% of Rochester's population lives below the federal poverty threshold. The city's median household income not only is lower than both the state median income and the median income of the neighboring Portsmouth, by nearly \$20,000, but it is lower than the national median income by over \$5,000.

Description of the Brownfields

The property consists of two developed parcels comprising approximately 0.95 acres located at 10 and 16 Wallace Street in Rochester, New Hampshire. All buildings were commercial/industrial style with slab-on-grade foundations. The buildings were all razed in 2010, as they presented an attractive nuisance and served as a place of illicit drug activity. The remaining 32,313 square feet of the property is mostly covered with concrete or asphalt pavement. Neighboring properties include a dentist's office, a restaurant, a feed store, and several single-family residential homes.

Phase I ESA findings from June 2007 showed methyl tertiary-butyl ether (MtBE), tetrachloroethene (PCE), and polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) present in site groundwater. Phase II findings from August 2007 have shown subsurface soil exceedances of state standards for PCE and PAHs; MtBE levels are within state standards. PCE exceedances have been found in all site monitoring wells, and trichloroethene (TCE, a PCE breakdown product) are now exceeding state standards at some monitoring locations. There are also concerns that the contamination, if not remediated, may eventually migrate to neighboring properties. Vapor intrusion into buildings resulting from contaminated groundwater will need to be addressed when property redevelopment begins. Currently, an office building on the adjacent property could be impacted by vapor intrusion if the soil source area at the former Advanced Recycling Site isn't addressed.

The former Advanced Recycling Site has been an attractive nuisance after it became vacant. Residents would use the site to engage in illicit drug activity, and eventually the City of Rochester razed the buildings on the property to help prevent these activities. Despite best efforts, however, crime data from the Rochester Police Department indicate that drug activity continues in vacant and/or neglected downtown properties.

b. Welfare, Environmental, and Public Health Impacts

Welfare Impacts

The Wallace Street brownfield site has been a vacant parking lot for the last ten years, with weeds growing through cracks in the asphalt. This lot vacancy has contributed to the classification of the City of Rochester's downtown region as blighted. The vacancy of the lot, which is not lighted at night, has also encouraged use of the property for illicit substance activity such as selling and purchasing. Data from the New Hampshire Drug Monitoring Initiative's July 2017 report indicates that the City of Rochester experienced 11-25 overdose deaths in 2016, making Rochester one of the top six municipalities in New Hampshire with the highest number of overdose deaths.

There are 76 brownfields-related properties in the relatively small City of Rochester, placing an undue burden specifically on the downtown area. Residential properties surround the 10-16 Wallace Street parcel, and a 76 unit block of low-income public housing, for elderly residents and residents with disabilities, is located within approximately a half mile of the Wallace Street parcel, as well as 55 low-income residents with housing vouchers living within a quarter-mile radius. Property values in the neighborhood will remain stagnant, and crime levels and drug overdoses remain elevated, the longer the vacant properties remain unaddressed.

Cumulative Environmental Issues

Based on information obtained using EJSCREEN mapping tool from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), within one mile of the Site, there are 15 sites that are stationary sources of air pollution (such as electric power plants, steel mills, factories, and universities) regulated by EPA, state, and local air pollution agencies. In addition, the Turnkey Landfill is located within the City of Rochester and less than five miles from the former Advanced Recycling site. The landfill accepts asbestos, CERCLA waste, industrial waste, and other waste materials. Having a landfill within city limits negatively impacts environmental welfare of City residents.

Lead poisoning is also a serious environmental concern for the City of Rochester. According to data from the New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority, of all 13,694 housing units within the City of Rochester, only 133 units were built in 2010 or later. The majority of available housing within the city (7,593 units) was built prior to 1980. A significant percentage (3,783 units) was built prior to 1950. This aged and aging housing stock, built prior to the ban against lead-based paints for residential purposes, presents serious concerns as to the presence of lead-based paint in both the interiors and exteriors of these units. Further, the majority of the older housing stock is located in the lower income downtown, meaning that lower income residents are disproportionately at risk of lead poisoning.

Cumulative Public Health Impacts

Rochester has been designated one of eight "high risk" communities in the State of New Hampshire for lead poisoning, as identified by the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services, mostly due to the age and conditions of the housing stock which is dominant in the downtown target area. This ranking is supported by a 2012 Health Needs Assessment from the regional Wentworth-Douglass Hospital which includes "physical environment" as one of the top 15 health needs in the Seacoast area.

In addition, a 2015 Needs Assessment from Rochester's Frisbie Memorial Hospital indicated that nearly half of Strafford County adults (45%) have high cholesterol, more than one

in four (28%) have high blood pressure, and more than one in four (30%) are obese. According to this same assessment, Strafford County bladder cancer rates are approximately 75% higher than the U.S. average, and general cancer rates in Strafford County are about 11% above the U.S. average and slightly higher than the New Hampshire average. Rehabilitating a vacant property that is an eyesore and attractive nuisance will contribute to a revitalized, more walkable downtown, which will improve public health.

c. Financial Need

i. Economic Conditions

While 13.2% of Rochester residents live below the poverty line, the neighboring fellow CDBG entitlement grantee, the City of Portsmouth, has a poverty rate of only 6.6%. Also, according to a March 2016 article in *The Rochester Times*, the City of Rochester “has the third highest number of [K-12] students who qualify for free and reduced lunches in the state, behind Manchester and Nashua,”ⁱ cities with over twice the population of Rochester.

The downtown district, in particular, has been identified in several City master plans and action plans as an economically disadvantaged region and one specifically targeted for federal Community Development Block Grant funding. For example, a current façade and code enforcement improvements program in the downtown region meets CDBG activity eligibility requirements based on the downtown qualifying as a slum or blighted area, and data from downtown business organization Rochester Main Street and the City’s Community Development Division indicates downtown commercial vacancy rates at about 25%. In addition, the downtown is a heavily low-income area, with a 76 unit block of low-income public housing, for elderly residents and residents with disabilities, is located within approximately a half mile of the Wallace Street parcel, as well as 55 low-income residents with housing vouchers living within a quarter-mile radius.

Although the City of Rochester’s need for remediation and redevelopment of the Wallace Street brownfield site is considerable, the city’s resources are highly constrained. The City of Rochester operates under a tax cap that prevents the City’s operating budget from increasing beyond a very small percentage. The State of New Hampshire, which does not collect income tax or sales tax, also does not offer as many state-funded grants or programs as other states that collect more taxes, which means that New Hampshire municipalities such as Rochester must turn to federally-funded grants as the only available funding source for many environmental and economic development activities.

ii. Economic Effects of Brownfields

The neighboring property owners, mostly small businesses and single-family residences, have voiced complaints about the vacant property for several years. The proposed project site’s former use as an advanced recycling facility has had negative effects on neighboring properties’ property values and businesses. Data from Rochester’s Assessing Office shows that the property value for 7 Wallace Street, which was at a high of \$217,500 in 2009, is now down to \$168,600 in 2017. The property values of 10 Wallace Street and 16 Wallace Street, the two parcels that comprise the former Advanced Recycling property, have also suffered. While 10 Wallace Street was valued at \$147,400 in 2009, it is now down to \$132,700, while 16 Wallace Street has dropped from \$158,900 in 2007 to \$128,800 in 2017. The proposed project will not only restore the two former Advanced Recycling parcels to productive economic use but also positively

impact neighborhood property values and reduce the 25% downtown commercial vacancy rate in the downtown district.

Summer 2017 crime data from the Rochester Police Department also indicates the downtown census tracts as experiencing the highest levels of crime in the city, including drug deals, burglaries, and drug overdoses. Known vacant properties are often used for public drug taking and lead to increased drug overdoses in the downtown district.

2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND FEASIBILITY OF SUCCESS

a. Project Description

i. Existing Conditions

The property consists of two developed parcels comprising approximately 0.95 acres located at 10 and 16 Wallace Street in Rochester, New Hampshire. The former warehouse buildings on the property were all razed by the City of Rochester in 2010, as they presented an attractive nuisance and served as a place of illicit drug activity. The remaining 32,313 square feet of the property is mostly covered with concrete or asphalt pavement. The property and its vicinity are serviced by municipal water and sewer. One water well is known to exist 700± feet southeast of the property. The City of Rochester Assessors' Office identifies the properties on Map 120 as Lots 306 (10 Wallace Street) and 308 (16 Wallace Street).

The City of Rochester is the owner of both lots. The City of Rochester's deed for the property is included as an attachment.

The general vicinity of the subject property is heavily developed for mixed commercial/industrial and residential use. Topography of the subject property and adjoining properties is generally flat. Local topography slopes gently towards the Cocheco River situated 1,750± feet to the west. Willow Brook is located 1,350± feet east of the subject property. Both the Cocheco River and Willow Brook flow in a general southerly direction. No surface water features were identified on the property.

Phase I ESA findings from June 2007 showed methyl tertiary-butyl ether (MtBE), tetrachloroethene (PCE), and polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) present in site groundwater. Phase II findings from August 2007 have shown subsurface soil exceedances of state standards for PCE and PAHs; MtBE levels are within state standards. PCE exceedances have been found in all site monitoring wells, and trichloroethene (TCE, a PCE breakdown product) are now exceeding state standards at some monitoring locations. There are also concerns that the contamination, if not remediated, may eventually migrate to neighboring properties.

ii. Proposed Cleanup Plan

Two areas of soil containing PCE above New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NH DES) soil remediation standards have been identified: soil to depths of 3± feet below local grade in the vicinity of the scale at the southwestern boundary of the site near Wallace Street and soils to depths of 12± feet as the eastern end of Building C. To achieve compliance with Env-Or 600 and prepare the site for redevelopment, the PCE source in site soil will need to be remediated and groundwater quality will need to comply with Ambient Groundwater Quality Standard (AGQS) or be monitored until compliance is achieved. Given the

detection of PCE at a concentration exceeding the GW-2 standard, potential volatile organic compound (VOC) vapors must be prevented from intruding into new occupied structures.

Source removal in the two defined PCE soil contamination areas should be conducted by excavation and off-site disposal followed by limited groundwater monitoring under a Groundwater Management Permit. Vapor mitigation measures in the form of Liquid Boot® Membrane or similar barrier are recommended for any new construction on the site during redevelopment.

Following remediation, the site will be enrolled in NH DES' voluntary cleanup program. Engineering and institutional will be used during the project. Any extra costs associated with the project, not described below, will be covered by the City of Rochester.

iii. Alignment with Revitalization Plans

The proposed redevelopment of the Wallace Street brownfield site aligns well with the City of Rochester's downtown revitalization plans. The redevelopment plans will replace the currently vacant lot with a light industrial/commercial building to be used as a small business incubator facility. This redevelopment aligns with priorities identified in the City's FY 2015-2020 Community Development Block Grant Consolidated Plan, which discusses the need to reduce the blight in Rochester's downtown region and encourage economic development, and the City's recently adopted update to its Economic Development Master Plan, which calls for more economic development focus on the downtown after a period of focus in other geographic areas of the City.

The City's current Downtown Master Plan also specifically calls for "substantive improvements to existing properties and new construction that lifts property values for surrounding areas." This proposed project will also help raise the property values of the neighboring properties, which are mostly small businesses. The *First Impressions: Rochester* report, a result of a University of New Hampshire initiative, also identified vacant and blighted properties as deterring downtown foot traffic. Further, the downtown region has been designated an Economic Revitalization Zone, which means businesses that move into the remediated property may be eligible for New Hampshire tax credits.

Existing infrastructure, such as sewer/water and public transportation, is well-established in the downtown region and will be utilized during the redevelopment. For example, there is a Route 2 Cooperative Alliance for Seacoast Transportation bus stop less than half a mile from the Wallace Street property, which is a walking distance of approximately six minutes. This will ensure lower redevelopment costs for the project and also allow low-income small business owners who may not have personal vehicles access to the small business incubator via public transit.

The HUD-DOT-EPA Livability Principles will also be consulted and incorporated into the project as much as possible. The project will (1) enhance economic competitiveness, by providing affordable commercial space for small businesses and sole proprietors, which is currently lacking in the downtown; (2) support existing communities, by remediating a contaminated property and returning the property to productive economic use; and (3) value communities and neighborhoods, by remediating a contaminated property in the downtown and preventing contamination of surrounding properties while constructing a small business incubator that will blend in well with the existing commercial-residential neighborhood, which currently has a dentist's office, an auto sales shop, a feed store, and a restaurant all within a

block radius of the project site.

b. Task Descriptions and Budget Table

Task I: Cooperative Agreement Oversight

This task will entail managing the grant and coordinating efforts between the City of Rochester, its Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP), and the EPA. This task includes outputs such as required reporting submitted to EPA via ACRES and other approved methods. It is anticipated that the Project Manager will spend 10 hours on this task at \$100/hour for a total of \$1,000. Travel costs will occur as part of Task 1, including funding to have the City's Project Manager attend the EPA National Brownfield Conference. Travel costs are estimated at \$1,000 to include airfare, lodging, and per diem meals.

Outputs: The anticipated outputs will be:

- Quarterly reports to EPA in ACRES
- Attendance by two staff persons/contractors at EPA National Brownfield Conference per year

Task II: Community Outreach and Engagement

This task includes public meetings conducted by the city regarding the site and its cleanup as well as meetings with businesses directly affected by the cleanup to discuss timing and coordination during the cleanup. The estimated three meetings will take place in public buildings that are handicap accessible, such as City Hall or the Rochester Community Center. Costs associated with this task are for staff to attend and run the meetings, the expense of placing legal advertisements in the newspaper, printing information for residents, and having the meeting notices translated and printed in languages other than English, in compliance with the City of Rochester's existing Language Access Plan, to ensure that non-English speaking and Limited English Proficiency residents have full access to information about the meetings and the cleanup.

Public notice of the Remedial Action Plan and a public comment period will be advertised to provide the public the opportunity to comment on the plan and to ask questions. Project details will be provided in access agreements to property owners in the vicinity of the cleanup. The city will work directly with these property owners to ensure they understand how they will benefit from and be impacted by the cleanup, as well as to negotiate access to properties if such becomes necessary during the course of remediation.

Outputs: The anticipated outputs will be:

- Three public meetings in accessible locations
- Drafting and publication of the Remedial Action Plan, including responses to all public comments

Task III: Site-Specific Activities

This task includes the cleanup work. The Analysis of Brownfields Cleanup Alternatives (ABCA), contained in the threshold criteria attachments, provides the evaluation of five alternatives. Alternative #2, excavation and off-site disposal, is the recommended cleanup approach. A summary of costs is provided under outputs.

Outputs: The anticipated outputs will be:

- Soil Excavation: Estimated 900 tons of soil to be excavated and disposed off-site, and backfilled with clean fill. The work is estimated to take nine days. Cost: \$209,400
- Groundwater Monitoring: Up to four off-site monitoring wells (one upgradient and three downgradient) are anticipated to be necessary to define the dissolved contaminant plumes. Two days of drilling to install the wells is estimated. Cost: \$56,500.

Total Cost for Alternative #2 presented in the attached ABCA: \$265,900.

Task IV: Oversee Site Cleanup

This task includes continual monitoring of the project and ensuring that the cleanup is progressing. The City's QEP will be completing the majority of this work with the City's Project Manager participating in weekly construction updates. The City of Rochester and their QEP will coordinate with the NH DES throughout the cleanup to make certain all required paperwork and closeout documentation is completed to properly document the work. The QEP will also be documenting labor performed on the project, through collection of weekly payroll forms and on-site worker interviews, as required to comply with the Davis-Bacon Wage Act. The QEP fees are expected to be \$15,000, and the number of hours for the City's Project Manager is estimated to be 10 hours at \$100/hour for a total of \$1,000.

Outputs: The anticipated outputs will be:

- EPA Quarterly Reports and updates to the ACRES database.
- A scope of work and budget for the remediation.
- Obtaining funding commitments for all funds necessary to complete the cleanup.
- Submission of all state-required reporting until achievement of final closeout.

Budget Table

	Project Tasks (\$)				
Budget Categories	1. Cooperative Agreement Oversight	2. Community Outreach & Engagement	3. Site-Specific Activities	4. Oversee Site Cleanup	Total
Personnel	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$0	\$1,000	\$3,000
Travel	\$1,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,000
Supplies	\$0	\$500	\$0	\$0	\$500
Contractual	\$7,000	\$2,500	\$171,000	\$15,000	\$195,500
Total Federal Funding	\$9,000	\$4,000	\$171,000	\$16,000	\$200,000
Cost Share	\$2,000	\$1,000	\$30,500	\$6,500	\$40,000

	Project Tasks (\$)				
Budget Categories	1. Cooperative Agreement Oversight	2. Community Outreach & Engagement	3. Site-Specific Activities	4. Oversee Site Cleanup	Total
Total Budget	\$11,000	\$5,000	\$201,500	\$22,500	\$240,000

c. Ability to Leverage Funds/Resources

General city funds have been reserved in a special fund to serve as the matching funds for this project. In addition, the downtown region has been designated an Economic Revitalization Zone, which means businesses that move into the remediated property may be eligible for New Hampshire tax credits.

Source	Purpose/Role	Amount (\$)	Status
Strafford Regional Planning Commission	drafting and/or reviewing responses to the project request for proposals, reviewing documents, and helping plan and execute the project's community outreach components	\$1,000 (\$50/hour for 20 hours)	Secured

d. Voluntary Cost Sharing

The voluntary cost sharing will take the form of relevant city staff's salary and benefits, which are paid through general city funds and the city departments' regular budgets. Specifically, the hours devoted to this project by the Grants Manager and the City Engineer will be counted as the voluntary cost share, which is estimated to be five hours per month by the Grants Manager (\$112/month or \$4,041 over the three-year grant period) and ten hours per month by the City Engineer (\$448/month or \$16,144 over the three-year grant period). These estimates are taken from the adopted FY 18 budget salaries for both positions.

3. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND PARTNERSHIPS

Community Engagement Plan

The City's Community Development Coordinator will be the contact person for the Community Engagement Plan. The pre-application engagement process involved a formal public hearing, with notice provided via posting to the city's website, posting to the Department of Public Work's Facebook page, posting in multiple key city locations, and an article in the local newspaper. The notice was published two weeks prior to the hearing. The public hearing notice was also sent to the Rochester Housing Authority to be posted in the public housing units that are located approximately a half mile from the brownfield site and sent to the Ward 6 Rochester United Neighborhoods (R.U.N.) neighborhood organization, as part of the City of Rochester's planned efforts to provide specific outreach to lower-income residents who live near the proposed project site.

The pre-application public hearing was held on October 19, 2017, at the beginning of the regular Public Works Committee meeting. The draft Analysis of Brownfields Cleanup Alternatives and draft Brownfields Cleanup Grant Application were both made available in hard copy, and it was announced that the draft Analysis of Brownfields Cleanup Alternatives was also available on the City website (http://www.rochesternh.net/sites/rochesternh/files/draft_wallace_st_fy17_brownfields_grant_application.pdf). There were no public comments made at the public hearing. Minutes from the public hearing are included as an attachment.

The post-award engagement process will involve the development and posting of a city-affiliated website containing information on the project, the project timeline, information on how potential construction companies and businesses can become involved, and the city's Section 3 policy. The community will also be engaged through partnerships with several community organizations (discussed under "Partnerships with Community Organizations") that have a wide reach, including a starting-phase planning meeting to which the general public will be invited. Information about the starting-phase planning meeting will also be sent to the Rochester Housing Authority and the Ward 6 R.U.N. group to be posted to these organizations' resident-members. Project progress, changes, and updates will be regularly discussed at Public Works & Buildings Committee and City Council meetings, which are publicly posted and open to the general public, and news releases detailing each phase of the project will be sent out to local media.

Protection of Sensitive Populations

The primary sensitive population in the census tract in which the brownfield is located, as identified through analysis of available demographic data, is low-income residents. Secondary sensitive populations include elderly residents, residents with disabilities, and minor residents, both demographics with higher health risks. During the project, remediation and construction crews will employ dust suppression procedures and technologies, and the project site will be surrounded at all times by a fence with appropriate signage to prevent access by the general public. The Department of Public Works will coordinate with the Rochester School Department to either reroute any school bus routes that currently pass near the Wallace Street site or, alternately, to suspend project work during times that school buses will pass near the site. The Department of Public Works will also coordinate with the Rochester Housing Authority to ensure that project updates and cautions are distributed to the public housing residents who reside in the buildings near the project site.

b. Partnerships with Government Agencies

The City of Rochester coordinated with NH Department of Environmental Services (NH DES) on the phase I report and will continue to coordinate with NH DES to conduct monitoring to ensure complete remediation of the site. The City will coordinate with EPA Region I on quarterly grant reporting and other grant compliance items. In addition, the City's Department of Public Works will work with the community organizations listed below, to identify and recruit appropriate business to occupy the completed small business incubator, and the Rochester Department of Building, Zoning, and Licensing Services, to ensure that the small business incubator is constructed according to local and state building, health, and safety codes.

c. Partnerships with Community Organizations

<i>Name of Organization</i>	<i>Organizational Website</i>	<i>Assistance To Be Provided</i>
Rochester Economic Development Commission	www.rochesternh.net/economic-development-commission	outreach and networking to downtown business community for community engagement; identification and recruitment of appropriate businesses to occupy completed small business incubator
Greater Rochester Chamber of Commerce	www.rochesternh.org	identification and recruitment of appropriate businesses to occupy completed small business incubator
Rochester Main Street	www.rochestermainstreet.org	outreach and networking to downtown business community for community engagement; identification and recruitment of appropriate businesses to occupy completed small business incubator
Strafford Regional Planning Commission	www.strafford.org	drafting and/or reviewing responses to the project request for proposals, reviewing documents, and helping plan and execute the project's community outreach components
Strafford Economic Development Corporation	www.sedcnh.org	outreach and networking to downtown business community for community engagement; identification and recruitment of appropriate businesses to occupy completed small business incubator

Letters of commitment from the Rochester Economic Development Commission, Greater Rochester Chamber of Commerce, Rochester Main Street, Strafford Regional Planning Commission, and the Strafford Economic Development Corporation are provided in the attachments to this grant application.

d. Partnerships with Workforce Development Programs

The City of Rochester intends to draw on existing partnerships with the Community Action Partnership of Strafford County's Workplace Success program (<http://www.straffordcap.org/programs/employment-a-training/workplace-success>), which provides job skills training and volunteer placement for low-income clients trying to re-enter the workforce while supporting their families; MY TURN (<https://www.my-turn.org/>), which helps low-income young adults develop vocational skills and identify career paths; and Great Bay Community College (<http://greatbay.edu/about/atac/about-the-center>), which hosts an Advanced Technology & Academic Center with the City of Rochester that teaches students advanced manufacturing skills. Specifically, the City of Rochester will ask each organization to advertise the small business incubator space to its clients/students and work with each organization to identify clients/students who may be interested in starting a small business that might be suitable

to the small business incubator. As many of these individuals are low-income and/or unemployed, including all of the clients of MY TURN and the Workplace Success program, preference will be to occupy the small business incubator with clients/students from these organizations, as low-income persons are the primary sensitive population served by this project.

4. PROGRAM BENEFITS

a. Welfare, Environmental, and Public Health Benefits

Excavation of contaminated soil will improve groundwater quality near the site and eliminate potential impacts to groundwater further downgradient and to downgradient surface water bodies nearby. The potential for vapor intrusion also will be removed. This is especially important as the site is located within a mixed residential-commercial neighborhood and approximately a half mile from a low-income block of 76 public housing units for elderly residents and residents with disabilities. In addition, within a quarter-mile radius of the project site are 55 low-income residents, as determined through housing voucher data from the Rochester Housing Authority.

Eliminating a vacant, blighted property and building a small business incubator will help address the concerns identified in the *First Impressions: Rochester* report, discussed in further detail below, regarding vacant and blighted properties deterring downtown foot traffic. Increasing the walkability of the downtown, through solving the unsightliness and safety concerns with the Wallace Street property in its current state, will also address several public health concerns. Frisbie Memorial Hospital's 2015 *Community Health Needs Assessment* has identified obesity education, senior health services, exercise education, and wellness initiatives as within the top twenty-three community health needs, all of which can be partially addressed through encouraging a more walking-friendly downtown.

b. Economic and Community Benefits

Replacing the currently vacant lot with a light industrial/commercial building will help to reduce the blight in Rochester's downtown region and help end the use of the property for illegal drug activity. This will also help raise the property values of the neighboring properties, which are mostly small businesses, and remediating hazardous conditions at the site will prevent the contaminants from migrating to these neighboring properties. Further, the downtown region has been designated an Economic Revitalization Zone, which means businesses that move into the remediated property may be eligible for New Hampshire tax credits.

Reducing vacancies downtown will help increase overall foot traffic and business, as the current vacancies prevent residents and visitors from walking in the downtown region. Several surveys and studies, such as the *First Impressions: Rochester* report from the University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension, have indicated that vacancies and lack of foot traffic in the downtown deter visitors from walking through this area and frequenting the shops and restaurants located there.ⁱⁱ Data from Rochester Main Street indicates a downtown commercial vacancy rate of about 25%.

The remediated property will attract businesses such as a sole proprietor electrician, a small lumber supply shop, and other similar light industrial contractors. These are the types of businesses well-suited to providing good, quality employment to residents without substantial

post-secondary education. This kind of economic development is essential to meeting the current-day needs of Rochester's lower-income residents without four-year post-secondary degrees, for whom factory jobs have largely been replaced with lower-paying service sector employment or advanced manufacturing jobs requiring higher skill levels.

Revitalization of the Brownfield Site

It is anticipated that this project will create jobs through the remediation, redevelopment, and post-redevelopment phases. During the remediation phases, the soil contamination remediation work will be contracted out due to the technical requirements of the work. After this remediation, when the small business incubator facility is constructed, components of the construction work will also be contracted out, though supervised by the Department of Public Works. During both project phases, bids and contracting will follow the City of Rochester's Section 3 preference and procurement policies.

After the facility is completed, it will be occupied by four or so small businesses in the commercial and/or light industrial sectors. It is estimated that these businesses will have somewhere between one to five employees per business. This means a total job creation of between four to twenty jobs in the post-redevelopment phase.

5. PROGRAMMATIC CAPABILITY AND PAST PERFORMANCE

a. Audit Findings

Recent financial audits (through 2016) of the City of Rochester have not resulted in any findings or concerns. Also, in 2014, Moody's upgraded the City of Rochester's financial rating to Aa3, and Standard and Poor's upgraded the city's bond rating to AA in the same year. The city's financial statements are available online at <http://www.rochesternh.net/business-finance/pages/city-financial-statements>.

b. Programmatic Capability

The City of Rochester is a municipal entity that has a budget for FY 18 of \$37.2 million. The Department of Public Works plans to work with the Economic Development Office to ensure the proposed project meets economic development goals, and the required matching funds have been reserved in a special Economic Development fund specifically for this project.

The City Engineer, Michael Bezanson, will be head of the project/project manager. Mr. Bezanson and the Department of Public Works have extensive experience in managing projects of this size and nature. This includes the Salmon Falls sewer extension project, partially funded through a federal Economic Development Administration grant, and the restoration of the formerly vacant and gutted 1904 City Hall Annex building, partially funded through federal and state historic preservation grants. The City's Grants Manager, Julian Long, will assist Mr. Bezanson in administering the EPA brownfields cleanup grant and submitting required reports, should a grant be awarded. Mr. Long has been involved in grant reporting and grant compliance with both the EDA project and the City Hall Annex restoration project.

Financial monitoring and compliance will be performed by the City's Business and Finance Office. Roland Connors, Deputy Finance Director, has provided financial oversight for many federal grants and projects, including the City's CDBG program, SAMHSA Drug Free

Communities grant, EDA sewer extension project, and City Hall Annex restoration project. Mr. Connors will provide the financial oversight for the Wallace Street project, should a grant be awarded.

The City also plans to coordinate with Nobis Engineering, Inc. (www.nobiseng.com) to perform the remediation portion of the project. Tim Andrews, Senior Project Manager and Director of Environmental Services, will be the point person at Nobis Engineering for this project. Nobis Engineering has twenty-nine years of experience working with federal government agencies as both a prime contractor and team subcontractor at more than 200 military, Superfund, and other governmental sites. This experience includes remedial investigation and remediation, A/E services and design-build expertise, compliance, Brownfields, storm water management; facilities support services, as well as construction management experience.

All procurement and hiring for the project will follow the City of Rochester's procurement policies. All items or services that are over \$10,000 will follow a sealed bid process. All items or services that are over \$1,000 but under \$10,000 will require obtaining three price quotes/estimates.

c. Measuring Environmental Results: Anticipated Outputs and Outcomes

The project manager will be responsible for tracking and measuring the project's progress over the course of the grant period and will do so by submitting quarterly reports to EPA. The reports will include information regarding the timeline or cleanup plan, as well as what is expected to occur in the next quarter. The ACRES database will be updated regularly and will track the property data and outcomes generated from the cleanup project.

Outputs:

- Work plans and quarterly reports submitted to EPA.
- Excavation and off-site disposal of 900 tons of soil.

Outcomes:

- A cleaner site as a result of the contamination being removed.
- Elimination of vapor intrusion, leading to improvement in indoor air quality in buildings associated with the redevelopment.
- Minimization of exposure to hazardous substances.
- The site will be back on the tax rolls, generating tax revenues.
- Improvement in the value of adjacent real estate.
- Ability for the city and the adjacent businesses to retain and increase the number of jobs within the City of Rochester.

d. Past Performance and Accomplishments

i. Previous EPA Brownfield Grants (Accomplishments and Grant Compliance)

The City of Rochester has not received an EPA Brownfields Grant but has extensive experience in managing federal grants and meeting federal environmental requirements.

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

1. Purpose and Accomplishments

The City of Rochester has extensive experience in managing federal grants and ensuring compliance with relevant federal laws and regulations, including but not limited to the National Environmental Policy Act, the Davis-Bacon Act, and 2 CFR 200. The City of Rochester is a long-time recipient of Community Development Block Grant funds, and the city also receives and manages funds through the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, U.S. Department of Justice, and other federal departments and agencies.

The City of Rochester also successfully managed a HUD Neighborhood Stabilization Program. The City of Rochester was awarded \$2.4 million and worked with The Housing Partnership, a regional nonprofit housing developer, to redevelop five bank-owned residential properties in a distressed downtown Rochester neighborhood, near downtown, into affordable homeownership opportunities for families and individuals. This project was completed in 2009.

More recently, the City of Rochester has received \$1.9 million from the federal Economic Development Administration to extend the city's water/sewer lines so that businesses in East Rochester can expand. This project, too, has required compliance with the federal environmental review process, the Davis-Bacon Act, and Section 3 requirements, as well as job creation and retention tracking. The project has generated well over \$100,000 in private investment.

2. Compliance with Grant Requirements

The City of Rochester has met all grant requirements for the federal grants it has received. This includes completion of environmental reviews prior to project commencement, Davis-Bacon Act monitoring and reporting, Section 3 initiatives and reporting, and job creation tracking and reporting. The Department of Public Works and Office of Economic & Community Development also have experience in remediating city-owned properties for environmental concerns and possible or actual contamination. For example, the City Hall Annex renovation project, started in fall 2016 and completed in fall 2017, has involved the survey and removal of asbestos, lead paint, and polychlorinated biphenyls from the over 100 year old building.

iii. Has Never Received any Type of Federal or Non-Federal Assistance Agreements

The City of Rochester has received other federal grants, as indicated above in Section ii.

ⁱ "Rochester City Councilors wrestle with school budget," *The Rochester Times*. 31 Mar 2016. <<http://www.fosters.com/article/20160331/NEWS/160339822>>.

ⁱⁱ *First Impressions: Rochester Final Report*, University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension. <https://extension.unh.edu/resources/files/Resource006192_Rep8877.pdf>.