



John R. Harley, Chairman

Laura M. Mathis, Executive Director

RO4-24-A-047

1. Applicant Identification

Middle Georgia Regional Commission
175 Emery Highway, Suite C
Macon, GA 31217

2. Funding Requested

- a. Assessment Grant Type: Assessment Coalition
- b. Federal Funds Requested: \$1,500,000

3. Location

(a) City of Macon & City of Milledgeville (b) Baldwin & Bibb County (c) Georgia

4. Coalition Members' Target Area and Priority Site Information

Target Area: Census Tracts – Bolded CTs are Justice40 Disadvantaged Communities

- *Middle Georgia Regional Commission – Lead Member (Target Area 1):*
13021011001, 13021011002, 13021011100, 13021011701, 13021013800
 - Priority Site: Emery/Gray Highways Auto/Truck Repair Facilities, 682 Clinton Street, 223 Woolfolk Street, 765, 781, and 793 Gray Highway; and 222 Emery Highway, Macon, GA 31217
- *Urban Development Authority - Non-Lead Member (Target Area 2):*
13021010400, 13021012200, 13021012400, 13021012500, 13021012600, 13021012700, 13021012800, 13021012900, 13021013101, 13021013102, 13021013201, 13021013202, 13021013900, 13021014000
 - Priority Site: Mid State Restaurant Equipment, 4094 Broadway, Macon, GA 31206
- *Baldwin County – Non-Lead Member (Target Area 3):*
13009970400, 13009970600, 13009970701, and 13009970702
 - Priority Site: Central State Hospital Campus, 620 Broad Street, Milledgeville, GA 31062

5. Contacts

a. Project Manager

Greg Boike, Director of Planning and
Public Administration
(478) 751-6160
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Macon, GA 31217

Project Director

Laura Mathis, Executive Director
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Macon, GA 31217



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6. Population

- Target Area 1: City of Macon, GA: 91,316
 - Target Area 2: City of Macon, GA: 91,316
 - Target Area 3: Baldwin County, GA: 43,876
- US Census: 2017–2021 American Community Survey

7. Other Factors

Other Factors	Page #
Community population is 10,000 or less.	N/A
The applicant is, or will assist, a federally recognized Indian tribe or United States territory.	N/A
The priority site(s) is impacted by mine-scarred land.	N/A
The priority site(s) is adjacent to a body of water (i.e., the border of the priority site(s) is contiguous or partially contiguous to the body of water, or would be contiguous or partially contiguous with a body of water but for a street, road, or other public thoroughfare separating them).	N/A
The priority site(s) is in a federally designated flood plain.	N/A
The reuse of the priority site(s) will facilitate renewable energy from wind, solar, or geothermal energy.	4-5
The reuse of the priority site(s) will incorporate energy efficiency measures.	4-5
The proposed project will improve local climate adaptation/mitigation capacity and resilience to protect residents and community investments.	4-5
At least 30% or more of the overall project budget will be spent on eligible reuse/area-wide planning activities, as described in Section I.B., for priority site(s) within the target area.	10–11
The target area(s) is located within a community in which a coal-fired power plant has recently closed (2013 or later) or is closing.	2

8. Letter from the State or Tribal Environmental Authority

See attached.

9. Releasing Copies of Applications

Please redact Pages 56 to 59 of the Final Application PDF Packet dated 11/10/23 as that information is considered confidential, privileged, and/or sensitive information.

October 31, 2023

VIA ELECTRONIC Amanda.Herrit@terracon.com

Ms. Sara Janovitz, Regional Brownfield Program Contact
US Environmental Protection Agency, Region 4
Atlanta Federal Center
61 Forsyth Street, S.W., 10th Fl
Atlanta, Georgia 30303-8960

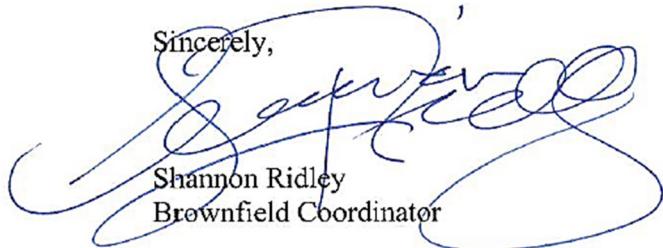
RE: State Acknowledgement Letter – Brownfield Assessment Grant Application
Middle Georgia Regional Commission

Dear Ms. Janovitz:

This letter serves as acknowledgement from the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) that the Middle Georgia Regional Commission, hereinafter the Commission, will be submitting an application to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (“EPA”) for funding assistance under the Federal Community-Wide Assessment Grant Program to conduct assessment activities. It is EPD’s understanding that Coalition consists of the Commission as the lead, Baldwin County, and the Macon Bibb Count Urban Development Authority. GA EPD understands that the Coalition is applying for \$1.5 million for planning and conducting assessments of hazardous and petroleum constituents on brownfield properties in the Gray Highway Corridor, East Macon area of Macon-Bibb County, Milledgeville – Central State Hospital Campus, and West and South Macon.

EPD would like to take this opportunity to encourage EPA’s positive decision in making a grant award to the Coalition for such assessment. A successful award would greatly assist these communities in their redevelopment efforts. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Shannon Ridley
Brownfield Coordinator

cc: Becky H Horace, Terracon
Tameka Gordon, Terracon

File: FFY 2024 EPA Grant Applicants, Middle Georgia Regional Commission



FY24 Brownfield Assessment Coalition Grant Narrative

1. PROJECT AREA DESCRIPTION AND PLANS FOR REVITALIZATION

a. Coalition Members, Target Areas, and Brownfields i. Coalition Members: Non-lead member Macon-Bibb County Urban Development Authority (UDA) is a government entity created by resolution adoption in April 1973 by the Board of Commissioners of Bibb County. This community-based organization is the visionary body that uses its private resources and public sector position to work collectively and creatively to solve issues that arise from urban revitalization to improve sensitive communities in Bibb County, Georgia. Non-lead member Baldwin County is a local government as defined in 2 CFR § 200.64 in the State of Georgia. The non-lead members will work in partnership with the Middle Georgia Regional Commission (MGRC) to work as a coalition to create an ongoing Brownfield Program for the region. Due to the non-lead members' lack of resources, this partnership will ensure their ability as local governments to address the vacant and derelict brownfield properties located within the proposed target areas. MGRC, as the lead agency, is eligible as a regional council established under a governmental authority and will provide its expertise in grant management, community engagement, and area planning to assist the non-lead members in support of their efforts in brownfield redevelopment.

ii. Overview of Brownfield Challenges and Description of Target Areas: **All three target areas and associated census tracts (CTs) are designated as Justice40 Disadvantaged Communities.** The City of Macon, seat of Bibb County, was established in 1823 at the most northern navigable portion of the Ocmulgee River where numerous mills were constructed. In the 1830s, the first railroads were constructed in Macon, and it became a railroad hub with tracks connecting to Savannah, Atlanta, and Chattanooga. Macon's economy was dominated by cotton and the textile industry. Post WWII, an industrial boom created many jobs from pulpwood, tobacco, and kaolin production and expanded the growth of crops through the mechanization of farming.¹ In the early 1960s, a local Civil Rights Movement group played an important role in promoting a successful nonviolent bus boycott that later led to peaceful negotiations to initiate desegregation in Macon.² As with many cities, Macon experienced urban decline from the 1970s to the 1990s leading to an increase in blighted properties and community disinvestment. In 2006, Macon lost its largest employer, Brown and Williamson Tobacco, losing 3,000 jobs.³ Since the 2000s, there has been a significant investment in the historic downtown areas of Macon, which has resulted in the renewal of Macon's downtown neighborhoods.⁴ These effects have not been realized in the target areas outside of the historic downtown including the UDA (non-leader member) target area (South Macon, West Macon/Payne) and MGRC (lead member) target area (Gray Highway Corridor, East Macon). EPA Brownfield Grant funding will promote community engagement and brownfield education, address sources of environmental contamination exposure, and assess identified priority sites. The MGRC lead-member **target area** is defined as **CTs 110.01, 110.02, 111, 117.01, and 138**. The target area, **Gray Highway Corridor and East Macon**, is in Macon-Bibb County on the north side of the Ocmulgee River and includes Gray Highway Corridor. The Gray Highway Corridor and East Macon area has been plagued with abandoned and vacant buildings, including former fueling stations, dry cleaners, and auto repair facilities. During the pandemic, many struggling businesses closed leaving blighted properties along these commercial corridors. The Macon-Bibb County UDA non-lead-member **target area** is defined as **CTs 104, 122, 124, 125,**

¹ Anderson, Nancy Briska. Macon. New Georgia Encyclopedia. Museum of Arts and Sciences. January 21, 2003, edited January 17, 2023.

² Crawley, James. Jessica Kendrick, Kendalee Marcus, et. al. Black Activism and the Macon Bus Boycott. faculty.mercer.edu/davis_da/fys102/black_activism. Accessed October 17, 2023.

³ Cox, Jeff. From tobacco titan to auto innovator: Korean company breathes new life into historic Macon building. WGXA News. June 29, 2023.

⁴ Neighborhood Revitalization. Historic Macon Foundation

126, 127, 128, 129, 131.01, 131.02, 132.01, 132.02, 139, and 140. The target area, **South Macon** (South of Eisenhower Parkway on the eastern portion of I-75 to US 41/129 intersection) and **West Macon/Payne** (West of I-75 to I-475, North to Vineville Avenue and south to the I-75/I-475 intersection, west to Edna Place), is in Macon-Bibb County. This target area is home to many former manufacturing and light industrial sites, motels, and fueling stations. These vacant and blighted properties are located along one of Macon’s gateway corridors. Many of these properties are unfenced and allow unlimited access for the nearby residential neighbors.

Baldwin County, non-lead member, is the home of the former Georgia state capital and county seat, the City of Milledgeville. Founded in 1803, Milledgeville was designed with 84 squares, like Savannah and Washington, D.C., and is known for the Georgia College and State University (GCSU) and the Central State Hospital. Pre-Civil War, the area boomed with commerce as the state capital, and it is still known for the many beautiful historic structures built at that time.⁵ After the Civil War, the state capital moved to Atlanta, and the Milledgeville area economy suffered as a result. Post WWII, the Milledgeville economy was supported by GCSU and other colleges, Central State Hospital, and state prisons. Like other communities, Milledgeville experienced urban decline at the end of the 20th century and recent catastrophic job losses. In the 2010s, 1,650 manufacturing jobs were lost due to Rheem and Shaw Plants closures. In 2015, the Harlee Branch Georgia Power **coal-fired plant** located on the Putnam/Baldwin County border closed resulting in the loss of 500 jobs.⁶ In the past five years, Baldwin County lost 4,500 jobs due to the Central State Hospital and state prison closures.⁶ The historic downtown area and university campus have received significant infrastructure investments since the 1990s, but the areas surrounding downtown have remained blighted and in need of substantial funding to address environmental issues in Milledgeville. **The Baldwin County non-lead-member target area** is defined as **CT 9704, 9706, 9707.01, and 9707.02** which includes the **Central State Hospital** campus and the **eastern portion of Milledgeville**. EPA Brownfield Assessment funding will create a site reuse plan with community input and complete environmental site assessments to redevelop the Central State Hospital campus. Many of the historic hospital buildings are abandoned and accessible by the nearby residential neighborhoods. EPA Brownfield Assessment funding will address the unknown environmental conditions of these blighted properties and brownfield challenges including vacant, unfenced contaminated properties and potential exposure to contaminants.

iii. Description of the Priority Brownfield Sites: The MGRC (lead member) has identified the Gray Highway Auto Repair Facilities, approximately 8 acres and 30 parcels, located at the Gray Highway / Emery Highway intersection, as their priority site. The Gray Highway Corridor serves as the eastern entrance to Macon, but it has been plagued by vacant, abandoned properties including dry cleaners, fueling stations, auto repair, and junk yards. The Gray Highway Corridor was heavily impacted during the pandemic when many struggling businesses permanently closed. At this intersection, there are many vacant properties (commercial and residential) and auto repair facilities with buildings constructed before 1960. Contaminants associated with on-site operations include volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and semi-VOCs (SVOCs), and heavy metals from prior use of paint, fuels, lubricants, solvents, hydraulic fluid, and transformer oil. Lead-containing materials (LCM) and asbestos-containing materials (ACM) are anticipated based on the age of the structures onsite. The proposed site reuse is mixed-use, reusing on-site buildings when able, to reduce waste, with commercial street-front-facing properties and residential internal-facing

⁵ Wilson, Robert J., Milledgeville. New Georgia Encyclopedia. Georgia College and State University. December 6, 2002, edited July 12, 2022.

⁶ Hobbs, Billy, Plant Branch Set to Close. www.unionrecorder.com. March 18, 2015

⁶ Rosen, Karen. Milledgeville / Baldwin County: Ready for Industry. Georgia Trend. October 31, 2013.

properties. Most of the site is vacant, and redevelopment will add new businesses. The existing on-site businesses will have the option of remaining at the site.

Baldwin County (non-lead member) has identified the **Central State Hospital Campus** as a priority site. The Central State Hospital Campus was one of the largest mental health institutions and has been in operation since 1842. Although the facility has had a turbulent history with reports of patient mistreatment, segregation, and overcrowding, the facility remained an economic driver for Baldwin County for over 175 years. The campus is **vacant** with only 3 of the 200 buildings still in operation for psychiatric care. The campus, approximately 2,000 acres, is listed on the “Place in Peril” list by the Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation.⁷ Contaminants associated with hospital operations include VOCs and SVOCs, heavy metals and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) from prior use of fuels, lubricants, solvents, hydraulic fluid, and transformer oil. LCM and ACM are anticipated based on pre-1960 structures on-site. Redevelopment considerations for this site include affordable housing and/or mixed-use development with green space. The MGRC has been granted access for site assessment in coordination with Baldwin County and the Central State Hospital Local Redevelopment Authority (CSHLRA).

The UDA (non-lead member) has identified the former **Mid State Restaurant Equipment** as a priority site. The Mid State Restaurant Equipment property is approximately 2.7 acres with a 31,000 sq. ft. warehouse located in South Macon. Previous operations included the manufacturing of restaurant equipment. A portion of the property is currently used for appliance repair and storage. There was a fire in the vacant portion on the building in 2017. Contaminants associated with on-site operations include VOCs and SVOCs, heavy metals, degreasers, fuels, lubricants, solvents, hydraulic fluid, and transformer oil. LCM and ACM are suspected at this site. Redevelopment considerations for this site include commercial/light industrial multiuse. Most of the site is vacant, and redevelopment will attract new businesses to the property. The existing businesses will not be displaced.

iv. Identifying Additional Sites: As part of community involvement, the MGRC requested community input and developed a site inventory of 31 MGRC target area potential sites, 51 UDA target area potential sites, and 21 Baldwin County target area potential sites. During the implementation of the MGRC’s Brownfield Program, **target-area residents and project partners** will identify additional sites within the underserved target area and Justice40 Disadvantaged Community. . MGRC will create an evaluation ranking criterion using county tax assessor website, census tract demographic data, and the Climate Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST) data to determine the areas of greatest need within the target areas to determine the order in which sites will be assessed. The MGRC will work with community members, stakeholders, non-lead members, and development professionals to get public input on brownfield properties in their area. When the priority sites have been assessed, the MGRC will identify additional sites throughout their geographic region for assessment.

b. Revitalization of the Target Areas i. Reuse Strategy and Alignment with Revitalization Plans

The Macon-Bibb Comprehensive Plan 2050 recognizes that Macon has experienced a substantial loss of jobs due to the textile and tobacco industries collapse, which led to high unemployment, crime, and poverty at rates higher than state/national averages. Public meetings were held in 2022 to receive community input on the completed plan. The main objectives of the plan include redevelopment of properties closer to the community core, reduction of land consumption for development, encouragement of sustainable and green community practices, incentivization of brownfield redevelopment, promotion of reuse of vacant buildings and historic structures, and the

⁷ Payne, David H. Central State Hospital. New Georgia Encyclopedia. University of Georgia. February 7, 2006, edited March 2, 2022.

use of Form-Based Code to promote brownfield site redevelopment for multipurpose communities (work/live/create areas) and promote multimodal transportation. The Macon-Bibb Comprehensive Plan identified South Macon (UDA target area) as an area designated for redevelopment and future growth. **The former Mid State Restaurant Equipment (UDA priority site)** has been identified as an industrial property that is **primed for commercial/light industrial infill**, and as described in the Comprehensive Plan, the priority site will be redeveloped as a multi-commercial/light industrial facility. The Comprehensive Plan identified the UDA target area as a focus area to promote the redevelopment of vacant/underused facilities into multiuse and affordable housing.

The Macon-Bibb Comprehensive Plan 2050 identified the **Gray Highway Corridor and East Macon** (MGRC target area) areas with moderate to very high concern for preserving historic and cultural resources. The EPA Brownfield Grant will be used to assess blighted properties in these commercial corridors, but it will also be used to evaluate whether these properties have historic/cultural resources that may be significant for possible inclusion on the National Registry for Historic Places. As part of the Comprehensive Plan, community members identified the following issues as concerns: blight, poverty, crime, and lack of affordable housing. Grant funding will assess properties in areas of concentrated poverty and blight where funding can be used as a catalyst to bring underused and vacant properties back on the tax roll with productive use. **The Gray Highway Auto Repair Facilities site will be redeveloped as mixed-use**, and as described in the Comprehensive Plan, will **combat issues of concern: removing blight and providing affordable housing**. Site reuse plans and revitalization plans will meet the needs of the community.

The **2023 Baldwin County Comprehensive Plan** was developed in 2022 with community involvement that included public meetings and an online survey. The plan identified the following goals based on the needs of the community: expanding industrial development, Central State Hospital redevelopment, workforce development, affordable housing, and removal of blighted structures. The Central State Hospital was identified as a priority site in the Comprehensive Plan. Since 2016, there has been an investment of over \$126M in the campus—a significant investment—but there is still a great need for redevelopment funding. EPA Brownfield funding will assess the hospital campus and facilitate site redevelopment to promote jobs, workforce development, affordable housing, and commercial and industrial reuse. **The Central State Hospital will be redeveloped as a mixed-use campus**, removing blight, and as described in the Comprehensive Plan, **providing affordable housing, commercial, and industrial facilities**.

ii. **Outcomes and Benefits of Reuse Strategy:** Funding from the EPA Brownfield Assessment Grant will meet the redevelopment goals identified in the Comprehensive Plans for each target area, which highlight brownfield assessment and sustainable infill redevelopment as a priority. The priority sites have environmental concerns inhibiting site reuse. Through environmental assessment and site-specific risk screening, these properties will be ready for site redevelopment. The **MGRC priority site, Gray Highway Auto Repair Facilities**, is proposed as a multi-use commercial and affordable housing facility strategically located on the Gray Highway Corridor near commercial and residential areas. The site reuse strategy will include renewable energy sources and energy-efficient measures.

The **Central State Hospital Campus** will be redeveloped as the **Renaissance Park**, a multi-use complex to include healthcare, entertainment, agri-business, technology, and education redevelopment. The campus currently includes approximately 200 buildings on 2,000 acres. The CSHLRA is leading the site redevelopment. Buildings beyond repair have been slated to be demolished. For other buildings, funding has been allocated to provide structural stabilization. Recently, approximately \$6.25M has been designated for site redevelopment including demolition

of buildings beyond repair and façade and building stabilization. Due to the campus' dilapidated condition and the multitude of buildings to assess, the funding received will not be enough to address the environmental assessments needed for site redevelopment. Site reuse and brownfield revitalization plans will address potential areas where renewable energy measures can be used to provide energy sources for the campus and help maintain a more sustainable campus.

The UDA has proposed the redevelopment of **Mid State Restaurant Equipment** site into a multi-purpose/light industrial facility for work/create space which will be used by entrepreneurs, artisans, and startups to develop/create/fabricate products. The site reuse strategy will include energy efficiency measures and renewable energy sources.

c. **Strategy for Leveraging Resources** i. Resources Needed for Site Reuse: The MGRC, UDA, and Baldwin County are eligible to pursue private, state, and federal grant options to further redevelopment efforts. The MGRC target area has a designated **Tax Allocation District (TAD), Ocmulgee Crossings**. Tax allocation funding will support infrastructure improvements, assessments, and demolition, when necessary, to offset cost and encourage investment in this area. TAD funding will further this endeavor by focusing infrastructure improvements on infill development, redeveloping commercial/mixed-use nodes, and encouraging pedestrian/bike friendly improvements and re-establishing neighborhood connectivity. Macon-Bibb County has committed funds for the expansion of the **Ocmulgee Heritage Trail** to provide links to nearby neighborhoods. The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) may be used to demolish buildings or conduct environmental assessments, as necessary, during site redevelopment. The UDA and Baldwin County target areas are located within Opportunity Zones, which provide tax incentives for developers to invest and support redevelopment. Eligible expenses for brownfield properties enrolled in the GA Environmental Protection Division (EPD)-Brownfield Program may be recouped through tax abatement. The City may use these tax incentives to attract potential investors to properties that have been assessed with grant funding. For sites that require cleanup, all three coalition members will apply for EPA Brownfield Cleanup Grant funding.

ii. Use of Existing Infrastructure: The selected priority sites are connected to existing infrastructure sufficient for future redevelopment, and infrastructure (sewer, water, roads, utilities) throughout the target areas is sufficient for additional redevelopment. If additional infrastructure needs are required, the MGRC and/or Coalition Partners will apply for state and federal grant funding.

2. COMMUNITY NEED AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

a. **Community Need** i. The Community's Need for Funding: The MGRC target area and non-lead target areas (UDA and Baldwin County) have underserved, sensitive populations living near brownfield properties. These historic, yet impoverished communities have experienced economic and social strife, with the average **per capita incomes (MGRC \$15,897, UDA \$14,543, Baldwin \$20,115)** and **median household incomes (MGRC \$32,840, UDA \$26,977, Baldwin \$47,235)** substantially lower than the national levels (**\$37,368; \$69,021**).⁸ The population living below the poverty level in the target area (**MGRC 47%, UDA 40%, Baldwin 30%**) is considerably higher than the national level (13%).⁷ Poverty levels for female heads of household in the target areas (MGRC 66%, UDA, 50%, Baldwin 53%) are higher than the national level (34%).⁷ Unemployment levels in the target area (MGRC 7%, UDA 14%, Baldwin 11%) are higher than the state and national average (6%).⁷ Lower per capita income, fewer residents employed in the workforce, and higher poverty rates in the target areas versus national levels mean less revenue for the target-area community budgets, limiting their ability to incentivize community rehabilitation through brownfield redevelopment. The target-area members have developed plans to address the

⁸ US Census: 2017–2021 American Community Survey

large number of brownfield sites and blighted structures in their communities, but **the communities of Macon-Bibb and Baldwin Counties** lack the funding to initiate a brownfield program due to the vast number of brownfield sites, the disproportionately poor population, and perpetual community disinvestment. The MGRC and non-lead members have limited funding allocated to provide assessments. Grant funding in combination with other available grant resources will augment the target area’s limited revenues so brownfield assessments can support economic development goals: diminish blight, attract new businesses, create better paying jobs, address health and crime issues, enhance prosperity, and improve tax revenues. EPA Assessment funding will alleviate the direct and indirect consequences of the many brownfield sites within these communities, and as a result, improve the quality of life for these sensitive populations.

ii. **Threats to Sensitive Populations (1) Health or Welfare of Sensitive Populations:**

Demographic Data⁹	MGRC	UDA	Baldwin	GA	US
African American	79%	80%	59%	32%	13%
Unemployment Rate	7%	14%	11%	6%	6%
SNAP/Food Stamps	39%	40%	25%	12%	11%
All people in poverty	47%	40%	30%	14%	13%
All families w/ children 18 and younger in poverty	53%	53%	32%	20%	17%
Female head of household w/ children 18 and younger in poverty	73%	60%	53%	34%	34%
Per capita average income	\$15,897	\$14,543	\$20,115	\$34,516	\$37,638

The target areas (MGRC, UDA, and Baldwin Co.) have **marginalized, minority populations** that have been adversely impacted by blighted neighborhoods with higher rates of lead exposure (housing pre-1960s) and incidents of asthma (particulate matter from traffic and industrial activities). **Children living in poverty are at the highest risk, with many female head of households, largely African American, living in poverty with children.** Families living at the poverty level and their children are most affected by declining economic conditions. Historically, there has been a concentration of poverty within the target area, with **residents dependent on government food assistance** and limited job opportunities.

According to the 2019 County Health Ranking Summary for Macon-Bibb and Baldwin Counties, these populations also have associated factors that contribute to adverse health conditions, including children living in poverty (Macon-Bibb 37%, Baldwin 33%, GA 22%) single-parent homes (Macon-Bibb 55%, Baldwin 47%, GA 35%), income inequality ratio for Macon-Bibb 6.4 and Baldwin 6.2 versus 5.0 for GA (higher ratio = greater divide between 80th and 20th percentile of incomes), substandard housing (Macon-Bibb 22%, Baldwin 20%, GA 18%), and violent crime (Macon-Bibb 500 per 100K, Baldwin 689 per 100K, GA 388 per 100K). The target-area residents experience negative health and welfare issues with direct (exposure to contaminants) and indirect (community disinvestment, blighted properties, substandard housing, loss of jobs) effects due to living near brownfield properties. The EPA Brownfield Coalition Assessment Grant will provide funding to assess brownfield properties and promote site redevelopment, which will reduce direct exposure to contaminants and promote redevelopment projects to create jobs, education opportunities, and affordable housing.

(2) **Greater Than Normal Incidence of Disease and Adverse Health Conditions:** The Environmental Justice (EJ) Screen Community Report states that both Macon-Bibb and Baldwin Counties have higher rates of asthma and cancer due to local environmental adverse conditions. According to the 2019 County Health Ranking Summary for Macon-Bibb and Baldwin Counties, both counties have higher rates of smoking (Macon-Bibb 21%, Baldwin 24%, GA 18%) and obesity (Macon-Bibb 36%, Baldwin 34%, GA 30%), and Macon-Bibb had more preventable hospital stays (6,238; GA

⁹ US Census 2017–2021 American Community Survey

4,851). Both Macon-Bibb (467 per 100K cases) and Baldwin Counties (484 per 100K cases) have higher rates of cancer than the state (464 per 100K cases) average.¹⁰

Based on the review of the EJ Screening Tool (info presented as state/national percentile), **MGRC target area** has higher rates of cancer, (50th, 37th) and asthma (96th, 96th) due to the proximity to brownfield sites. This target area has higher risk levels for air toxics cancer (50th, 94th), particulate matter (45th, 86th), ozone (57th, 74th), diesel particulate matter (61st, 59th), air toxics respiratory (59th, 92nd), and traffic proximity (86th, 73rd) which all can contribute to higher rates of asthma and respiratory illnesses including cancer. Other potential risks for cancer include exposure to lead-based paint and asbestos (pre-1960 housing), Superfund proximity (88th), underground storage tanks (89th), and wastewater discharge (92nd).

The EJ Screen Report (info presented as state/national percentile) indicates that the **UDA target area** has higher rates of asthma (96th, 95th). This target area has higher risk levels for air toxics cancer (50th, 94th), particulate matter (53rd, 87th), ozone (57th, 74th), diesel particulate matter (64th, 72nd), and air toxics respiratory (59th, 92nd), which all can contribute to higher rates of asthma and respiratory illnesses, including cancer, due to living near brownfield sites. Other potential risks for cancer include exposure to lead-based paint and asbestos (pre-1960 housing 89th, 66th), Superfund proximity (96th, 90th), underground storage tanks (78th, 72nd), toxic releases to air (93th, 79th), and wastewater discharge (87th, 72nd).

The EJ Screen Report (info presented as state/national percentile) indicates that the **Baldwin target area** has higher rates of cancer (45th, 33rd) and asthma (84th, 85th). This target area has higher risk levels for particulate matter (41st, 85th), which can contribute to higher rates of asthma and respiratory illnesses, including cancer. Other potential risks for cancer include exposure to lead-based paint and asbestos (pre-1960 housing 78th, 51st), RMP Facility proximity (84th, 82nd), underground storage tanks (82nd, 75th), and wastewater discharge (89th, 76th). EPA Grant funding will address these issues associated with sensitive populations living near contaminated properties.

(3) Environmental Justice (a) Identification of Environmental Justice Issues: All target areas and census tracts are identified as part of the Justice40 Initiative and have stressed, minority populations with high levels of poverty and environmental burdens. The three target areas described in this application have sensitive populations living near industrial facilities that are plagued with exposure to air pollution and other environmental contaminants. According to the Economic Innovation Group's Distressed Communities Index (DCI), **Macon-Bibb and Baldwin Counties are highly distressed communities.**¹¹ The DCI is used to focus funding on services and programs for distressed communities. These communities have experienced a **disproportionate share of negative environmental consequences** due to historical industrial practices including the production of textiles and chemicals used in these processes. The historic textile practices and loss of industry have left a long-lasting impact on this community including **persistent poverty, high unemployment, substandard housing**, and as a result, **cumulative environmental impacts**. Due to the **disproportionate effects** of the known **EJ issues** in this community, the sensitive and impoverished populations are unable to relocate away from environmental threats. EPA Brownfield Assessment funding will assess properties for potential contamination to help limit exposure to these threatened populations.

(b) Advancing Environmental Justice: The EPA Brownfield funding will provide assessment and cleanup planning to promote the remediation and revitalization of this communities for their sensitive and distressed population. This project will promote affordable housing, removing blight,

¹⁰ State Cancer Profiles. National Cancer Institute. 2016–2020.

¹¹ Economic Innovation Group. Distressed Communities Index.2020

and provide opportunities for site redevelopment and new jobs. For priority sites with existing businesses, the tenants will have the opportunity to remain at the site, or if needed, the tenants will have assistance to find nearby commercial rental alternatives. The MGRC will promote plans and policies that minimize displacement and promote anti-eviction and housing assistance to maintain residents and businesses in the community. The MGRC (lead member) priority site, **Gray Highways Auto/Truck Repair Facilities**, will be redeveloped into mixed-use commercial and residential to **revitalize the neighborhood, create jobs, and provide affordable housing in the target area**. The UDA (non-lead member) priority site, **Mid State Restaurant Equipment**, will be redeveloped as a multiuse industrial/commercial facility to **promote job growth and remove blight from the target area**. The Baldwin County (non-leader member) priority site, **Central State Hospital**, will be redeveloped as a multiuse campus with equitable housing, commercial, and light industrial facilities to **restore/reuse historic buildings and provide jobs**.

b. Community Engagement i. Project Involvement & ii. Project Roles: Below are local organizations who have expressed a desire to be involved in site selection, prioritization, cleanup, and future redevelopment of the target-area brownfield sites.

Name of Org.	Point of Contact	Specific involvement in the project or assistance provided
Macon Arts Alliance (East Macon)	Julie Wilkerson (478) 743-6940 director@maconarts.org	The Macon Arts Alliance is located within the target area and will provide grant status updates to the community, assist with community outreach , and provide meeting space.
Westside Partners Neighborhood (West Macon)	Dr. Henry Ficklin (478) 751-7170 hficklin@maconbibb.us	The Westside Partners Neighborhood is a community organization and will provide updates to the target area, promote community meetings, and provide input for the site inventory .
Central Georgia Technical College (West Macon)	Andrea Griner (478) 757-3551 agriner@centralgatech.edu	The Central Georgia Technical College is a public college near the target area. The College will provide guidance on the site inventory, promote community meetings, and provide target-area meeting space .
Macon Area Habitat for Humanity (West Macon)	Ivey Hall (478) 745-0630 ihall@maconhabitat.org	Habitat for Humanity is a nonprofit that focuses on providing affordable housing solutions. Habitat for Humanity will provide grant status updates to the community, assist with community outreach , and provide assistance for residential rehabilitation in the target area.
Georgia College and State University (GCSU) (Baldwin County)	Dr. Damian Francis (478) 445-392 Damian.francis@gcsu.edu	The GCSU is a public university near the target area. The GCSU will provide guidance on the site inventory and future reuse planning with a focus on providing more affordable housing within the target area.
Oconee Heights Neighborhood (Baldwin County)	Dr. Gloria Wicker (478) 453-4176 Gloria.wicker@baldwin.k12.ga.us	The Oconee Heights Neighborhood is a community organization and will provide updates to the target area, promote community meetings , and provide input for the site inventory .

iii. Incorporating Community Input: To gain community support and inform the local coalition member communities, several meetings were held on June 27, 2022; August 11, 2022; and November 10, 2022, to discuss the need for Brownfield Assessment Grant funding. The MGRC has held meetings over the past two years to discuss the redevelopment of brownfield properties located within the coalition member areas. The MGRC and coalition members will encourage community participation through brownfield site identification and prioritization, educational sessions, and project update meetings. During community meetings held by coalition members, community input and suggestions will be documented. Community member suggestions will be discussed during quarterly brownfield coalition meetings, and the responses will be posted on the Brownfield Program website. Target-area, resident-identified sites will be added to the inventory, evaluated with project partner input, and prioritized based on need, project goals, and future land-use redevelopment plans. Comments/questions gathered during Brownfield Program meetings will be addressed through the MGRC Facebook page, brownfield website, and MGRC office **every month** throughout the grant period.

Coalition member and project partner websites, social media, local/regional publications, and distributed print material will ensure distribution throughout the coalition member areas. A Brownfield Program webpage will be developed as part of this grant to allow residents access to periodic updates on the Program’s status. To share the coalition’s Brownfield Program information, a Community Involvement Plan (CIP) will be created detailing the community engagement activities, schedule, project background, and key players. The CIP will be available for review in the MGRC office, coalition members’ County Government offices, libraries, and on the brownfield webpage. A Brownfield Program brochure explaining the program will be shared throughout the community at coalition members’ public meetings held within the target areas and local libraries. The Program Director will provide project information during regularly scheduled monthly Council meetings, community educational meetings, and charrettes/visioning sessions. Meetings will be promoted through the Brownfields Program webpage, email distribution lists, and social media. To continue to promote community involvement, community outreach will be conducted via virtual and in-person meetings to discuss the grant and engage the community through virtual and in-person small group, educational, and focused question-and-answer sessions.

3. TASK DESCRIPTIONS, COST ESTIMATES, AND MEASURING PROGRESS

a. Description of Tasks/Activities and Outputs: The MGRC is requesting a US EPA Brownfields Coalition Assessment Grant in the amount of \$1,500,000.

Task 1: Outreach	
i.	<i>Project Implementation:</i> The MGRC’s Brownfield (BF) Project Director will develop a Community Involvement Plan (CIP), outreach materials, BF Project website, and social media posts with the assistance of the environmental contractor (EC). MGRC staff will lead the community meetings to keep the public informed on project plans and updates. Supplies are budgeted for the printing of outreach materials (brochures/handouts), office supplies, and software to manage the grant.
ii.	<i>Anticipated Project Schedule:</i> CIP created in 1 st quarter. Community meetings held semiannually in each coalition member’s target area. Website and outreach materials will be created in the 1 st quarter, and updates will be posted quarterly throughout the grant project.
iii.	<i>Task/Activity Lead:</i> MGRC: Laura Mathis, Executive Director, BF Project Director
iv.	<i>Outputs:</i> CIP, BF Website, 12 Community Meetings, Brochures/Handouts, Social Media Posts, Summary of Community Meetings in EPA required Quarterly Reports.
Task 2: Site Inventory	
i.	<i>Project Implementation:</i> MGRC’s BF Project Manager will work with target-area residents during community meetings to create a thorough site inventory for assessment. Abandoned and underused properties identified by the residents will be researched further by MGRC staff using the property appraiser’s website. Once a list is compiled, the EC will work with MGRC staff to create an evaluation ranking tool to determine, with the help of residents, the order in which the sites will be addressed.
ii.	<i>Anticipated Project Schedule:</i> Community meeting held in the 2 nd quarter will continue the preliminary inventory process, which began with this application. Evaluation ranking process taking place in the 2 nd quarter and continuing throughout the grant project.
iii.	<i>Task/Activity Lead:</i> MGRC: Greg Boike, Director of Planning, BF Project Manager
iv.	<i>Outputs:</i> Evaluation Ranking Tool, Site Inventory List
Task 3: Assessment	
i.	<i>Project Implementation:</i> The EC will conduct Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) activities at sites selected and ranked through the Site Inventory Task, starting first with the three priority sites listed in this application. ASTM-AAI compliant Phase Is; Generic Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP); Phase IIs which will include the SS-QAPP. Prior to assessment, site access agreements and property eligibility determinations approval will be obtained.

ii.	<i>Anticipated Project Schedule:</i> Assessment activities begin in the 2 nd quarter and continue throughout the grant.
iii.	<i>Task/Activity Lead:</i> The EC will implement the technical aspects of the project with oversight from the MGRC Greg Boike, Director of Planning and Public Administration, BF Project Manager.
iv.	<i>Outputs:</i> 42 Phase I ESAs, 1 Generic QAPP, 25 Phase II ESAs including SS-QAPP, Site Access Agreements and Property Eligibility Determinations.
Task 4: Remediation/Reuse Planning	
i.	<i>Project Implementation:</i> For projects identified for cleanup, the EC will prepare the Analysis for BF Cleanup Alternatives (ABCA) and/or Cleanup Plans. Cleanup planning will include evaluating cleanup alternatives, calculating cleanup costs, and determining site appropriate remediation/reuse planning to reduce health/environmental risks. The EC will assist the MGRC in hosting charrettes/visioning sessions for key properties. The planner will create Site Reuse Plans and BF Revitalization Plans for each target area.
ii.	<i>Anticipated Project Schedule:</i> Plans & Charrettes begin in 9 th quarter and continue throughout the grant.
iii.	<i>Task/Activity Lead:</i> The EC will implement the technical aspects of the project with oversight from the MGRC Greg Boike, Director of Planning and Public Administration, BF Project Manager.
iv.	<i>Outputs:</i> 10 ABCAs, 6 Vision Sessions/Charrettes, 3 BF Rev. Plans, 6 Site Reuse Plans
Task 5: Programmatic Support	
i.	<i>Project Implementation:</i> MGRC's BF Project Manager will oversee grant implementation and administration to ensure compliance with the EPA Cooperative Agreement Work Plan, schedule, and terms and conditions. The EC will assist the MGRC in completing ACRES Database Reporting, Yearly Financial Reporting, Quarterly Reporting, MBE/WBE Forms, and all additional Programmatic Support for the four-year term of the grant. MGRC staff travel budget allows for two staff to attend four national/regional/grantee brownfield training conferences/workshops.
ii.	<i>Anticipated Project Schedule:</i> ACRES Reporting begins in the 1 st quarter, and Quarterly Reporting begins in the 2 nd quarter and continues throughout the grant project. Annual Reporting and Forms created in the 5 th , 9 th , 13 th quarters and during final closeout.
iii.	<i>Task/Activity Lead:</i> MGRC: Laura Mathis, Executive Director, BF Project Director
iv.	<i>Outputs:</i> ACRES Database Reporting, 4 Annual Financial Reports, 16 Quarterly Reports, 4 MBE/WBE Forms, Programmatic Support for the four-year grant period. Two staff to attend four conferences.

b. Cost Estimates: Below are the anticipated cost estimates for this project *based on past brownfield projects as determined by local market standards with contractual hourly rates based on the skills needed for the specific tasks.* The budget for this project includes travel, supplies, and contractual costs only. **Sixty-one percent (61%) of the budget will be spent on site-specific work through the Assessment Task and 32% on eligible area-wide planning through the Remediation/Reuse Planning Task.** **Task 1 Outreach:** Contractual: Community Involvement Plan \$4,000 (40hrs x \$100); Brownfield Website, Outreach Brochure/Handouts, Social Media Posts \$3,500 (35hrs x \$100); 12 Community Education Meetings \$18,000 (180hrs x \$100; \$1,500/meeting). Supplies: Outreach Supplies (software, printouts) \$2,000. **Task 2 Site Inventory:** Contractual: Potential Brownfield Site Inventory and Evaluation Ranking Tool Creation \$16,000 (160hrs x \$100). **Task 3 Assessment:** Contractual: 42 Phase I ESAs \$4,000 each for a total of \$168,000; 1 Generic QAPP \$5,500; 25 Phase II ESAs including SS-QAPP at \$30,000 each for a total of \$750,000. **Task 4 Remediation/Reuse Planning:** Contractual: 10 ABCAs \$5,500 for a total of \$55,000; 6 Vision Sessions/Charrettes \$12,000 (\$2,000/meeting); 6 Site Reuse Assessment for a total of \$180,000 (\$30,000 each; Planner: 100hrs x \$200; Market Analysts: 50hrs x \$150; Environmental Professional: 25hrs x \$100); 3 Brownfield Revitalization Plans for a total of \$240,000 (\$80,000 each; Planner: 200hrs x \$200; Market Analysts: 174hrs x \$150; Environmental Professional: 139hrs x \$100). **Task 5 Programmatic Support:** Contractual: ACRES Database Reporting, Yearly Financial Reporting, Quarterly Reporting, MBE/WBE

Forms, Programmatic Support for the four-year grant period \$30,000 (300hrs x \$100). Travel: Two staff to attend four conferences for \$16,000 (flights at \$800, 3 nights in hotel at \$300/night, incidentals and per diem at \$75 per day [4 days] x 2 attendees x 4 events.)

Category	Tasks					Totals
	<i>Outreach</i>	<i>Site Inventory</i>	<i>Assessment</i>	<i>Remediation/Reuse Planning</i>	<i>Programmatic Support</i>	
Travel					\$16,000	\$16,000
Supplies	\$2,000					\$2,000
Contractual	\$25,500	\$16,000	\$923,500	\$487,000	\$30,000	\$1,482,000
Total Budget	\$27,500	\$16,000	\$923,500	\$487,000	\$46,000	\$1,500,000

c. Plan to Measure and Evaluate Environmental Progress and Results: To ensure this EPA Brownfield Project is on schedule, the MGRC, coalition partners, and the EC will meet quarterly to track all **outputs identified in 3.a.** using an Excel spreadsheet and will report progress in fulfilling the scope of work, goals, and objectives to the EPA via quarterly reports. In addition, project expenditures and activities will be compared to the project’s schedule to ensure the grant project will be completed within the four-year time frame. Site-specific data will be entered and tracked in the ACRES database. The tracked outputs include the number of neighborhood meetings, public meetings, meetings with community groups and partners, environmental assessments, ABCAs, and cleanup reuse plans. The tracked outcomes include community participation, acres assessed, acres ready for reuse, redevelopment dollars leveraged, and jobs created. In the event the project is not being completed efficiently, the MGRC has countermeasures in place to address this problem. The MGRC and EPA Project Officer will have monthly calls and, if needed, will create a Corrective Action Plan to get the project back on schedule.

4. PROGRAMMATIC CAPABILITY AND PAST PERFORMANCE

a. Programmatic Capability i. Organizational Capacity, ii. Organizational Structure, & iii.

Description of Key Staff: The MGRC staff has a strong capacity to carry out the programmatic, administrative, and financial requirements of the grant with their previous grant management experience. The MGRC annually manages the Economic Development Administration (EDA) Revolving Loan Fund, OneGeorgia Grants, US Department of Housing (HUD) entitlement grant funds (CDBG & HOME), and State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds through the American Rescue Plan and facilitates the application process for local small business and nonprofits who have been economically affected by the pandemic. Laura Mathis, MGRC Executive Director, will serve as the **Brownfields Project Director**. She is responsible for the oversight and completion of grant administrative and financial requirements. Ms. Mathis has over 30 years of experience in public administration and previously served as the Deputy Director and now serves as the MGRC Executive Director. Ms. Mathis works on behalf of local governments to secure funding to provide local government services, promote job creation, and encourage private investment. She is responsible for managing MGRC staff and providing executive oversight of day-to-day activities. Greg Boike, Director of Planning and Public Administration, has served in this position for seven years and previously served as the MGRC Senior Government Services Specialist. Mr. Boike will serve as the **Brownfields Project Manager** and will be responsible for the management of the grant day-to-day activities. Mr. Boike will be the primary contact and will provide technical oversight for the project. Matt Garvin, Director of Finance, will serve as the grant’s financial director. Mr. Garvin has been the **Financial Director** since 2014, has over 30 years of experience, and provides overall direction of the Finance Department supervising accounting, purchasing, financial planning, and revenue divisions. He will be responsible for completing drawdowns through the ASAP system and financial oversight. The MGRC will have a memorandum of

agreement with both non-lead members and will work together through grant tasks to spend funds fairly and equitably throughout the three target areas.

iv. Acquiring Additional Resources: The MGRC procured a contractor in compliance with the fair and open competition requirements in 2 CFR § 200 and 2 CFR § 1500.17. The environmental contractor was selected for both grant proposal writing and grant implementation services prior to submitting the EPA Grant application. Price reasonableness for the grant implementation work was considered and was a selection factor in the evaluation of the proposals received. The MGRC has systems in place to appropriately acquire additional expertise and resources as needed to successfully complete the project. The Request for Qualifications (RFQ) was advertised October 6–November 7, 2022, and was posted on the Georgia Procurement Registry and the MGRC website. The Q&A was distributed on October 24, 2022. The solicitation was posted for 30 days, consistent with MGRC policy, and award of the contract was included on the agenda for the regular MGRC Council meeting for approval. This approval was required to move forward with the grant application. This is MGRC’s first grant application under the EPA Brownfields Program. In response to the solicitation, MGRC received **eight** responses to the solicitation that were reviewed by a selection committee comprised of the Executive Director, Finance Director (Procurement Manager), and the Director of Public Administration. Each response was reviewed at length, scored, and ranked based on the MGRC’s established formal RFQ review process using a score-based ranking criterion. In addition, with this RFQ request, the MGRC included a fee proposal and cost criteria, which were also considered in the weighted evaluation ranking criteria. The recommendation of the selection committee was provided to the MGRC Council and approved unanimously. The contractor was notified of their selection to assist the MGRC with the preparation of the US EPA Assessment Coalition Grant and implementation of the grant if awarded to the MGRC. The MGRC promotes strong practices, local hiring, and will link community members to potential employment opportunities for brownfield-related redevelopment via community outreach practices and project updates.

b. **Past Performance and Accomplishments** ii. Has Not Received an EPA Brownfields Grant but has Received Other Federal or Non-Federal Assistance Agreements: MGRC managed a \$210K grant from the US Economic Development Administration (EDA). This grant (2020–2022), with a \$90K local match, aided in the development/implementation of economic development activities to support the regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). In October 2023, MGRC received \$54K from the Southeast Crescent Regional Commission (SCRC). This grant includes support of the federal SCRC statutory objectives and technical assistance to local communities within the SCRC service area. The project will be completed in September 2024. MGRC is currently managing \$48K (\$12K state/local match) from the Federal Transit Administration’s Section 5311 program. This funding supports the Mobility Management activities of the MGRC and will help transit-dependent populations with transit needs. The first community Transit Development Plan (TDP) meeting was held on November 2, 2023.

(2) Compliance with Grant Requirements: The MGRC has a history of compliance with grant work plans, schedules, and terms and conditions and has an excellent history of timely reporting with all award agencies. The MGRC maintains grant activity schedules to ensure timely results. Laura Mathis, Project Director; Greg Boike, Project Manager; and Matt Garvin, Finance Director, are skilled in grant administration including project management and will ensure compliance with all financial and reporting requirements. The MGRC tracks all project results individually and will be able to manage the requirements for tracking projects in ACRES when awarded a grant from the EPA.



**FY24 Brownfield Assessment Coalition Grant
Threshold Criteria**

Threshold Criteria

1. Applicant Eligibility

- a. The Middle Georgia Regional Commission (MGRC; lead applicant) is eligible to apply for the EPA Brownfields Assessment Coalition Grant as a regional council established under a governmental authority. The MGRC was created effective July 1, 2009, under the 2009 Georgia Planning Act. Regional commissions are public agencies created and established by the Georgia Planning Act (O.C.G.A. 50-8-32) to assist local governments and help establish coordinated and comprehensive planning in the state.
- b. MGRC is not exempt from Federal taxation under section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code.

2. Number and Eligibility of Non-lead Coalition Members

Non-lead members of this Coalition Assessment Grant are the Macon-Bibb County Urban Development Authority, Georgia, and Baldwin County, Georgia. The Urban Development Authority was established as a government authority in 1974 by Bibb County. **Documentation of eligibility is attached.** Baldwin County is a local government pursuant to 2 CFR §200.64 and is eligible to participate in this project.

Neither the Urban Development Authority nor Baldwin County are exempt from Federal taxation under section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code.

3. Target Areas

- *Middle Georgia Regional Commission – Lead Member (Target Area 1):* 13021011001, 13021011002, 13021011100, 13021011701, 13021013800
- *Urban Development Authority - Non-Lead Member (Target Area 2):*
13021010400, 13021012200, 13021012400, 13021012500, 13021012600,
13021012700, 13021012800, 13021012900, 13021013101, 13021013102,
13021013201, 13021013202, 13021013900, 13021014000
- *Baldwin County – Non-Lead Member (Target Area 3):*
13009970400, 13009970600, 13009970701, and 13009970702

All census tracts listed above (in all target areas) are designated as Justice40 Disadvantaged communities/census tracts.

4. Existing Brownfields Grants to Non-lead Members

The non-lead coalition members are not the recipients of an open cooperative agreement for MARC Grant funding.

5. Coalition Agreement

Letters signed by each coalition member citing the agreement to participate in the EPA Brownfield Assessment Coalition Grant are attached.

6. Community Involvement

In an effort to gain community support and inform the local coalition member communities, several meetings were held on June 27, 2022; August 11, 2022; and November 10, 2022 to

discuss the need for Brownfield Assessment Grant funding. The MGRC has held meetings over the past two years to discuss the redevelopment of brownfield properties located within the coalition member areas.

The MGRC and coalition members will encourage community participation through brownfield site identification and prioritization, educational sessions, and project update meetings. During community meetings held by coalition members, community input and suggestions will be documented. Community member suggestions will be discussed during quarterly brownfield coalition meetings, and the responses will be posted on the Brownfield Program website. Target-area, resident-identified sites will be added to the inventory, evaluated with project partner input, and prioritized based on need, project goals, and future land-use redevelopment plans. Comments/questions gathered during Brownfield Program meetings from residents will be addressed through the MGRC Facebook page, brownfield website, and at the MGRC office **every month** throughout the grant period.

Coalition member and project partner websites, social media, local/regional publications, and distributed print material will ensure distribution throughout the coalition member areas. A Brownfield Program webpage will be developed as part of this grant to allow residents access to periodic updates on the Program's status. To share the coalition's Brownfield Program information, a Community Involvement Plan (CIP) will be created detailing the community engagement activities, schedule, project background, and key players. The CIP will be available for review in the MGRC office, coalition members' County Government offices, libraries, and on the brownfield webpage. A Brownfield Program brochure explaining the program will be shared throughout the community at coalition members' public meetings held within the target areas and local libraries. The Program Director will provide project information during regularly scheduled monthly Council meetings, community educational meetings, and charrettes/visioning sessions.

Meetings will be promoted through the Brownfields Program webpage, email distribution lists, and social media. To continue to promote community involvement, community outreach will be conducted via virtual and in-person meetings to discuss the grant and engage the community through virtual and in-person small group, educational, and focused question-and-answer sessions.

7. Expenditure of Existing Grant Funds

The MGRC affirms that they do not have an open EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant or Multipurpose Grant.

8. Contractors and Named Subrecipients

The MGRC procured a contractor in compliance with the fair and open competition requirements in 2 CFR § 200 and 2 CFR § 1500.17. The environmental contractor was selected prior to submitting the application to the EPA for both grant proposal writing and grant implementation services. Using local contracting requirements and procurement process, the MGRC procured a qualified environmental contractor who will assist with technical and reporting portions of the Brownfield Assessment Coalition Grant. The Request for Qualifications (RFQ) was advertised October 6–November 7, 2022, and was posted on the Georgia Procurement Registry and the MGRC website. The response to questions submitted regarding the RFQ solicitation was distributed on October 24, 2022. A total of eight responses were received.

Middle Georgia Regional Commission, GA
FY2024 US EPA Brownfields Assessment Coalition
Threshold Criteria

Each response was reviewed at length, scored, and ranked based on MGRC's established formal RFQ review process using a score based ranking criterion. In addition, with this RFQ request, the MGRC included a fee proposal and cost criteria, which were also considered in the weighted evaluation ranking criteria. Both the RFQ and fee proposal were reviewed by a selection committee comprised of the Executive Director, Finance Director (Procurement Manager), and the Director of Public Administration. Upon evaluation of all submissions, **Terracon Consultants** was recommended and presented to the MGRC Council for approval on November 17, 2022. Upon approval, Terracon was notified of their selection to assist MGRC with the preparation of the US EPA Brownfields Assessment Coalition Grant and implementation of the grant if awarded to MGRC.

MGRC affirms that it does not have subrecipients associated with this grant application.

See attached RFQ solicitation and executed contract.