



RHODE ISLAND  
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

235 Promenade Street, Providence, RI 02908-5767 TDD: Dial 711

November 23, 2011

Ms. Diane Kelley  
Regional Brownfields Coordinator- Region 1  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
5 Post Office Square  
Suite 100, Mail Code: OSRR7-2  
Boston, MA 02109-3912

*RE: FY 2012 Brownfields Assessment Grant – Hazardous Substances & Petroleum*

Dear Ms. Kelley:

On behalf of the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management ("RIDEM"), enclosed is a proposal for US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) FY 2012 Brownfields Assessment Grant funding for hazardous substances and petroleum assessments for use on a *community wide* basis. As you are aware, RIDEM has a very successful Targeted Brownfields Assessment (TBA) program since receiving its first assessment grant in 2007. The attached proposal for \$400,000 (\$200,000 hazardous substance and \$200,000 Petroleum) aims to continue the successful momentum gained as a result of previous grants received and provide support on a statewide basis to those rural/suburban communities that, to date, have not had the ability to participate in the TBA program.

RIDEM recognizes the increased challenges that all municipalities face, and the importance of transforming brownfields sites into productive properties to provide both immediate and long-term economic and environmental benefits. Through the information presented in this application, we hope it becomes clear that the successful relationships RIDEM's brownfields program has fostered with municipalities are real, measurable and highly valued by the entire brownfields redevelopment community in Rhode Island. The funding RIDEM has been able to provide to communities for brownfields assessments through its EPA Assessment Grants, has helped eliminate public health concerns, create new greenspace and recreational opportunities, and provide new jobs and housing for local residents. The entire State of Rhode Island continues to experience the most dire economic conditions in recent history, with one of the highest unemployment rate in the country and continued high home foreclosure.

To compound the poor economic conditions, Rhode Island has been hit hard by numerous natural disasters in recent times. In March 2010, Rhode Island experienced its worst flooding in more than 100 years, as swollen rivers left neighborhoods under 10 feet of water, damaged buildings and collapsed bridges and dams. The effects of the floods were still being felt when record snow fall in winter of 2010/2011 caused roofs to collapse on hundreds of buildings that were already damaged by the floods. In August 2011, Tropical Storm Irene toppled thousands of trees, causing damage to buildings and power outages for over a week in many Rhode Island communities. This was followed by a freak snow storm in October 2011 which caused more fallen trees and power outages. These disasters have only served to exacerbate Rhode Island's ongoing economic crisis. As such, the need for assessment work in numerous Rhode Island communities that are working diligently to revitalize one of their most limited resources - clean and usable land - is greater than ever. With this grant we intend to assist in the redevelopment of these Brownfields into sustainable communities and through our partnership as a KeepSpace partner, our goal is to create a healthy, prosperous and sustainable future for all of Rhode Island.

RIDEM has established an extremely successful TBA program, supporting award winning projects including the 2011 Brownfields Renewal Award Social Impact winner (the Woonsocket Middle School project) and the 2005 Phoenix Award winner (the Save the Bay education center). The success of the program is a result, in part, to the strong statewide partnerships established, and RIDEM will continue to work with these stakeholders in determining priorities within each community. A total of 7 letters of support/commitment were received from Community Based Organizations (see Attachment C). The following is the specific information requested in the proposal guidelines:

- a. **Applicant Identification:** RI Dept. of Environmental Management, 235 Promenade St., Providence, RI 02908
- b. **DUNS Number:** 111441213
- c. **Funding Requested:**
  - i) Grant Type: Assessment
  - ii) Funds Requested: \$200,000 Hazardous Substances and \$200,000 Petroleum
  - iii) Contamination: Hazardous Substances and Petroleum
  - iv) Scope: Community-wide
- d. **Location:** State of Rhode Island
- e. **Not a site-specific proposal, therefore, not applicable.**
- f. **Contacts:**

<i><b><u>i) Project Director:</u></b></i>	<i><b><u>ii) Chief Executive:</u></b></i>
Cynthia M. Gianfrancesco, Principal Environmental Scientist RIDEM - OWM 235 Promenade Street, Providence, RI 02908 Ph: (401) 222-4700 (x7126) / Fax: (401) 222-3812 <a href="mailto:Cynthia.Gianfrancesco@dem.ri.gov">Cynthia.Gianfrancesco@dem.ri.gov</a>	Janet L. Coit, Director RIDEM 235 Promenade Street, Providence, RI 02908 Ph: (401) 222-2771 / Fax: (401) 222-6802 <a href="mailto:Janet.Coit@dem.ri.gov">Janet.Coit@dem.ri.gov</a>

- g. **Date Submitted:** November 23, 2011
- h. **Project Period:** Three years from date of Cooperative Agreement with EPA (10/1/12 through 9/30/15)
- i. **Population:** State of Rhode Island: 1,052,567 ( *US Census Bureau, 2010*)
- j. **Special Consideration Checklist:** Please see Attachment B.

Please contact me if you have any questions or need further information concerning this proposal. We look forward to a continued successful partnership with EPA in years to come. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Cynthia M. Gianfrancesco, CHMM  
Principal Environmental Scientist  
Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management

cc: Don West, Environmental Management Support, Inc.  
Leo Hellested, RIDEM



## EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant FY 2012 – Hazardous Substances & Petroleum RI Department of Environmental Management

### 1. Community Need

#### 1.a Health, Welfare, and Environment

Rhode Island is ideally situated in southern New England and is a state well-known for its seaside location, historic architecture and wide-ranging educational and recreational assets. Communities across Rhode Island have received national recognition for their remarkable physical and economic revitalization. However, many pressing challenges continue to exist throughout this “Smallest State in the Union” – the pressing need to develop affordable housing, ensuring sustainable growth management in rural areas, bringing underutilized sites back to productive reuse, and preserving the state’s many historic resources. All of these challenges exist against the backdrop of one of RI’s longest and deepest economic recessions ever experienced.

Rhode Island’s widespread system of rivers was part of the soul of the American Industrial Revolution beginning in the 1700’s. America’s first textile mill could have been built along practically any river on the eastern seaboard, but in 1790 the forces of mechanical know-how and skilled labor came together in Pawtucket, RI where the Blackstone River provided the power that kicked off America’s drive to industrialization. In 1790, Samuel Slater, an English defector, came to Rhode Island with the knowledge of the closely guarded workings of cotton textile manufacturing machinery. Samuel Slater set up shop at the now famous Slater Mill along the Blackstone River and commenced spinning cotton full time – this is known as the flashpoint that began the Industrial Revolution.

Rhode Island’s 39 municipalities each have a unique characteristics, yet are intertwined by a decline in quality of life due to faltering economic prosperity, environmental blight, and housing challenges. Many of these similarities have been *negative* in nature since 2007 with the start of the national recession. Unemployment rates consistently exceed the national average, with RI continuously experiencing some of the worst jobs numbers in the country. The state’s unemployment rate stands at 10.4 percent (Oct. 2011), the highest jobless rate among the New England states.

The industrial past of Rhode Island as the home of the American Industrial Revolution has saddled most communities with rundown, underutilized sites, all with extensive environmental concerns that impede economic development and prevent the creation of plentiful greenspace and recreational opportunities. As the second most densely populated state in the country (behind New Jersey), the ability to identify and protect greenspace and land for recreational opportunities is much more challenging than in less densely populated regions of the country.

As much as the State’s river systems have provided numerous valuable assets, they have also been the source of much recent economic and personal hardship. In March 2010, Rhode Island experienced its worst flooding in more than 100 years, as swollen rivers threatened to collapse bridges and dams. A stretch of the main East Coast highway, Interstate 95, was shut down, and Amtrak suspended trains on its busy Northeast lines through the State. The Pawtuxet River ultimately crested at 20.79, nearly 12 feet above flood stage. The effects of the floods were still being felt when record snow fall in winter of 2010/2011 caused roofs to collapse on buildings that were already damaged by the floods. In August 2011, Tropical Storm Irene toppled thousands of trees, causing damage to buildings and power outages for well over a week in many communities. This was followed by a freak snow storm in October 2011 which caused additional fallen trees and extended power outages. These continuous serious weather events, 2 (two) of which resulted in the declaration of federal states of emergency, have only served to exacerbate Rhode Island’s ongoing economic problems.

These overall impacts of brownfields sites in Rhode Island can be summed up as follows:

<b>Environmental Impacts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Historically, numerous contaminants have been identified across RI, including heavy metals, PCBs, chlorinated volatile organic compounds, semi-volatile organic compounds, arsenic and petroleum; water quality impacts to the state's many rivers and Narragansett Bay are continuous.</li> <li>Diminished fisheries/recreational resources residents due to pollution and blight; impaired scenic and recreational value of rivers and urban waterways.</li> <li>Impacts to groundwater, surface runoff and migration of contaminants to neighboring properties; biological/physical/chemical risk associated with contaminated sites (both large &amp; small sites).</li> <li>The loss of clean, undeveloped land because developers want to avoid the stigma of building on a contaminated piece of property – this is especially true for schools, day-cares and similar institutions.</li> <li>Contaminated sediment deposition during March 2010 historic floods.</li> </ul>
<b>Social/Welfare Impacts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Impaired community safety &amp; quality of life due to the presence of underutilized properties.</li> <li>Decreased number of affordable housing units, local jobs &amp; impaired local business growth.</li> <li>Decrease in civic pride, resident voice and municipal participation.</li> </ul>
<b>Public Health Impacts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A growing number of abandoned and deteriorated sites/structures that pose clear health and safety risks for community residents; mill fires, unfortunately, continue to pose a significant risk, especially when the mill is located in a densely populated area.</li> <li>High asthma due to local air quality issues (<i>entire state is designated as non-attainment for the ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standard</i>); high lead due to paint and soil exposure.</li> <li>Ever-present exposure pathways (e.g. vapor intrusion, dermal contact).</li> <li>Contact with impaired waters and sediment in major river systems.</li> </ul>

The exact number of brownfield sites in Rhode Island is unknown, although over 2,000 contaminated sites have been identified statewide. What is known is that the types of environmental, social and health impacts identified above are felt across the state. The types of businesses commonly found in RI that will be addressed by the hazardous substances funding include automotive shops, gas stations, electroplating, dry-cleaning, and former textile mills which were later used for other industrial purposes, including machine shops. The types of businesses that will be addressed by the petroleum funding include automotive shops, gas stations, and former manufacturing facilities that utilized tanks for lubricants and heating oil. If the growing demand placed upon RIDEM for assessment funding is indicative of the size and scope of the brownfields challenges across Rhode Island, this funding will be of tremendous value to the many municipalities and property owners vying for much-needed assessments.

	STATE	NATIONAL
Population	1,052,567 <sup>1</sup>	308,745,538 <sup>1</sup>
Population Density – Persons per Square Mile	1,018.1 (Ranked 2 <sup>nd</sup> ) <sup>1</sup>	87.4 <sup>1</sup>
Population, Percent Change 2000 to 2010	0.4% <sup>1</sup>	9.7% <sup>1</sup>
Percent Hispanic or Latino (of Any Race)	12.5% <sup>2</sup>	16.4% <sup>2</sup>
Percent Population Living in Environmental Justice Area	19% <sup>3</sup>	N/A

1) 2010 US Census Data; 2) US Census Bureau, 2010 American Community Survey; 3) RIDEM's "Policy for Considering EJ in the Review of Investigation and Remediation of Contaminated Properties" (June 2009) found at: [www.dem.ri.gov/envequity/index.htm](http://www.dem.ri.gov/envequity/index.htm)

While RIDEM is still struggling with how to reconcile the increasing community demands for comprehensive cumulative impacts analyses within its existing regulatory framework, we clearly acknowledge that certain communities experience a disproportionate burden of health risks from both environmental contamination and conditions that make individuals more vulnerable to illness. This is particularly true in RI's urban communities relative to issues of lead poisoning and asthma rates among RI's most vulnerable population, its children. The issue of cumulative environmental impacts was critical in discussions with stakeholders in the development of RIDEM's Environmental Justice requirements promulgated in 2011 under the RIDEM's *Rules and Regulations for the Investigation and Remediation of Hazardous Materials Releases (Remediation Regulation)*. To help address these

issues, the KeepSpace program was initiated in 2007. KeepSpace is a statewide organization, of which RIDEM is a partner, whose mission is to work together in diverse partnerships with a spirit of respect, collaboration and cooperation to create a healthy, prosperous, sustainable future for Rhode Island.

CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND WELFARE	RHODE ISLAND
Total Child Population (2009)	226,763 <sup>1</sup>
% Children with Elevated Blood Lead Levels (% screen positive)	3.0% <sup>2</sup>
% Children in Poverty	16.9% <sup>3</sup>
% Children in Single- Parent Families	32% <sup>1</sup>
Children Hospitalized w/ Primary Diagnosis of Asthma, Rate per 1,000 Children	1.9 <sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rhode Island Kids Count Factbook Indicators (US Census Bureau, ACS)

<sup>2</sup> Rhode Island Kids Count (Lead poisoning in children eligible to enter kindergarten in Fall 2012 screened with blood lead level  $\geq 10$  mcg/dull); based upon RI Dept. of Health Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program statistics)

<sup>3</sup> Rhode Island Kids Count (US Census Bureau, ACS 2006-2009)

<sup>4</sup> Rhode Island Dept. of Health, Hospital Discharge Database (2005-2009)

In Rhode Island between 2005 and 2009, the hospitalization rate for primary diagnosis of asthma for Black children (5.7 per 1,000 children) was more than four times the rate for non-Hispanic White children (1.3 per 1,000 children). Between 2005 and 2009, Hispanic children in Rhode Island were hospitalized for asthma two and a half times as often as White children. (*Rhode Island Dept. of Health, Hospital Discharge Database 2005-2009*)

Although the percentages of children with elevated blood lead levels are declining among all groups nationally, low-income and minority children remain the most likely to be lead poisoned. Children living in Rhode Island's six core cities (where most poor children and minority children live) are at increased risk for lead exposure because the housing stock tends to be older. (*Childhood lead poisoning in Rhode Island: The numbers, 2010 Edition*)

In terms of poverty status of RI's children population, RI ranked 19<sup>th</sup> overall (1<sup>st</sup> is best, 50<sup>th</sup> is worst) and in New England, RI's children ranked 5<sup>th</sup> near the bottom (1<sup>st</sup> is best, 6<sup>th</sup> is worst). Families with incomes below 50% of the federal poverty threshold are considered to be in extreme poverty. In 2010, the extreme poverty level was \$8,804 for a family of three with two children and \$11,081 for a family of four with two children. Of the 38,604 children living below the poverty threshold in RI from 2007 to 2009, almost half (46%) live in extreme poverty. In total, an estimated 7.8% of all children in RI live in extreme poverty. (*RI Kids Count using ACS for 2006-2009*)

According to the American Community Survey conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau, there were 210,226 children living with one or more of their parents in Rhode Island between 2007 and 2009. Of these, 33% (68,360) were living with an unmarried parent, a significant increase from 27% of children in 2000. (*RI Kids Count using ACS 2007-2009*)

### **1.b Financial Need**

Like many other states, Rhode Island is facing severe fiscal challenges as part of the national economic downturn. In 2006, the RI General Assembly capped annual property tax increases beginning in FY 2008 at 5.25%, limiting the amount of money that municipalities can raise through taxation. As a result, many RI communities have turned their attention towards increasing the overall tax base with the growth of business and new job sectors. Brownfields are viewed as a key part of this effort. Bringing underutilized sites back to productive reuse will help bring critically important resources back into Rhode Island's communities. Cities and towns with such limited tax bases are clearly challenged to have their operating budget cover the cost of education, public safety and general government operations. Due to their limited budgets, most Rhode Island towns (outside of the urban core) have little in the way of professional staff. This grant will allow RIDEM to continue to play a key role for our more rural communities faced with blighted, contaminated sites. These communities often turn to RIDEM to help jump start their much needed revitalization priorities.

With just over one million residents, Rhode Island does not have the tax base to make up existing budget shortfalls without impacts being felt statewide. The resulting state budget cuts included reductions to all state agencies – our own agency's budget (general revenue/state funds) has decreased from \$38.0 million in FY2007 down to \$32.6 million in FY2010. Similarly, between FY2005 and FY2010, RIDEM saw its staff resources cut by nearly 25% (519 full time employees (FTEs) in 2005 down to 396 FTEs in 2010). Similar severe cuts have been passed on to all municipalities (see table below on financial indicators for municipal impacts). As such, the State does not have the ability to fund brownfields projects through its general fund, and relies on EPA brownfields grants to assist others across RI. The following tables provide a clear picture of the demographics and financial statistics for Rhode Island:

	STATE	NATIONAL
Population	1,052,567 <sup>1</sup>	308,745,538 <sup>1</sup>
Unemployment	10.4% <sup>4</sup>	9.1% <sup>2</sup>
Poverty Rate	14.0% <sup>3</sup>	15.3% <sup>3</sup>
Percent Minority	23.6% <sup>1*</sup>	36.3% <sup>1*</sup>
Per Capita Income	\$27,667 <sup>3</sup>	\$26,059 <sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 2010 US Census Data (\*Percent minority refers to those who reported race & ethnicity as other than non-Hispanic white alone.)

<sup>2</sup> Sept. 2011 National Unemployment Rate

<sup>3</sup> US Census Bureau, 2010 American Community Survey

<sup>4</sup> Oct. 2011 Rhode Island Dept of Labor Force Statistics, Labor Market Information

More than \$100 million in federal aid has already been allocated to RI to help the families and businesses that were ravaged by the March 2010 flooding event referenced above. The effects of the floods are still felt across RI as many neighborhoods are rebuilt, damaged bridges/roads remain closed, and buildings along the rivers are left in disrepair. This, along with other more recent natural disasters, has only served to exacerbate the ongoing fiscal crisis.

FINANCIAL INDICATORS	RHODE ISLAND
RI Unemployment Rate – October 2011	10.4% <sup>1</sup>
Pace of Private Sector Job Growth – Aug. 2010 - Aug. 2011 (lowest in New England)	0.6% <sup>1</sup>
RI Residential Foreclosure Deeds Filed During 1 <sup>st</sup> 6 months of 2011	1,128 (188 per month) <sup>2</sup>
Overall Reduction in State Aid to Cities & Towns Over Recent 2 Year Period (FY2009 & FY2010)	25% <sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> RI Dept. of Labor & Training Labor Force Brief (October 2011)

<sup>2</sup> RI HousingWorks 2011 Fact Book – based on The Warren Group Data

<sup>3</sup> Provided by Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns

**UNEMPLOYMENT** - Rhode Island has consistently had one of the highest unemployment rates in the nation since mid-2007. Rhode Island has the 6<sup>th</sup> highest (tied with North Carolina) unemployment rate in the 50 states and the highest of the New England states (Connecticut at 8.7% and Massachusetts 7.3%) (October 2011).

**LACK OF JOB GROWTH** - Through September 2011, RI had a net loss of 36,700 total jobs from December 2006, the peak in RI employment. Manufacturing had the largest loss (-11,000), followed by Construction (-8,000), Financial Activities (-6,300), Government (-5,100), Trade, Transportation & Utilities (-4,700), Professional & Business Services (-3,600), and Information (-600). (RI Dept. of Labor & Training Labor Brief, Sept. 2011)

**FORECLOSURES** - The foreclosure crisis is a persistent problem for Rhode Island. In the first six months of 2011, there were a total of 1,128 residential foreclosure deeds filed in Rhode Island, averaging 188 per month. In 2010, Rhode Island averaged 157 residential foreclosure deeds filed per month. Rhode Island's foreclosure crisis is different than that in other states because of the large share of multi-family properties affected in the state's urban communities. Over 35% of all RI foreclosures from Jan. 2009 through Dec. 2010 were multifamily homes, which

account for the bulk of rental housing in many communities. During the first six months of 2011, 28% of the state's residential foreclosures were multi-family properties. (*RI HousingWorks 2011 Fact Book*)

**CUTS IN STATE AID** - RI's budget climate is such that approximately \$257 million has been eliminated in state aid to cities and towns over the FY2009 & FY2010 budget cycles. The result has been widespread cuts to local services, leaving municipalities with an inability to manage brownfields sites in their communities. Raising taxes is not considered a viable option for the State considering RI already has one of the highest national sales taxes at 7%, with California being the highest at 7.25%. (*The Tax Foundation 2011*)

**MUNICIPALITIES FILING FOR BANKRUPTCY** - In May 2010, Central Falls, RI went into receivership, and then filed for bankruptcy in August 2011. The population was 19,376 at the time of the 2010 census. With an area of only 1.29 square miles, it is the smallest and most densely populated city in Rhode Island. Reduced pension benefits for retirees, layoffs, and extreme cuts in city services have been the result of said bankruptcy.

Currently, Rhode Island has a great unmet funding need for assessment work in numerous communities. RIDEM has over 10 TBA applications on file awaiting funding, with over 22 ongoing TBA projects and currently no additional federal funding available to meet these needs. Each year, RIDEM receives more TBA applications than it can fund as municipalities become aware of the success of RIDEM's TBA. This grant is crucial to ensuring that the momentum of RIDEM's TBA program across the State continues, with particular emphasis on more rural communities that previously have been unable to take advantage of EPA assessment funding.

## **2. Project Description and Feasibility of Success**

### **2.a Project Description**

RIDEM will utilize this grant funding in continued support of its established TBA program to be utilized statewide, but intends to concentrate efforts in the 10 suburban/rural towns with populations of less than 10,000. RIDEM has been conducting Brownfield assessments since the inception of the EPA Brownfields Pilot program in 1996. The program has been managed by Cynthia Gianfrancesco since 2005 and has grown from an annual budget of \$100,000 per year utilizing CERCLA Section 128(a) Subtitle C (128(a)) funds, to between \$200,000 and \$400,000 per year utilizing a combination of 128(a), Brownfields Assessment Grant and State environmental funds.

The majority of Rhode Island communities are small, under-funded/under-staffed, with little financial and technical ability to manage brownfields sites. Every municipality in the State has historic mill villages that are now in disrepair, typically along rivers that were historically once utilized for hydro-power and waste disposal. The historic floods of 2010 have left these mill villages in a state of further disrepair and abandonment, and these communities have come to depend on RIDEM's TBA program to provide funding and expertise which they otherwise would not be able to obtain. With this grant, RIDEM aims to assist municipalities, tribes, and non-profits, stimulate development, and facilitate identification and reduction of threats to human health and the environment at underutilized sites, which in many cases have been sitting vacant and tax delinquent for years.

The site selection process will begin in the early summer of 2012 with an announcement of funding availability and request for submittal of the currently established TBA application, which will be due in the fall of 2012. The announcement may be made through a variety of communications outlets, including press releases, direct email and the Internet, and with the help of our community engagement partners. One or more public informational meeting will be held to explain the process. The TBA application requires information necessary to determine if a site is eligible to receive assistance based on all of EPA's eligibility requirements. RIDEM's TBA application process is a competitive process and sites are scored and prioritized based upon numerous factors, such as the extent to which a property is underutilized, assessment costs, development of a reuse plan (which includes sustainable redevelopment), financial incentives offered by the applicant, leveraging of funds for cleanup, creation of open space, and the applicant's

community involvement process. The State of Rhode Island requires that each municipality prepare a Comprehensive Plan and Affordable Housing Plan (must be updated through a stakeholder process every 5 years) which describe a community's overall planning efforts and vision for revitalization. Sites that have been identified in the Comprehensive Plan will be given a higher priority and applicants will be asked to provide a description of their community plan, how it relates to the site and proposed funding for cleanup and redevelopment.

All TBA applications will be scored and the highest scoring applications (at least 2 for hazardous substance & 2 for petroleum) will be recommended for funding, with priority given to communities which have not had brownfields assessment work conducted in the past or do not have their own EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant; therefore, site selection will focus on the 10 towns with populations of 10,000 or less. Recommendations for site selection will be sent to all Community Based Organizations (CBO) in early 2013 for comments, and if requested, a public meeting to discuss the site selection process will be held. Applicants selected for assessment will be required (with our help) to carry out Community Engagement activities which may include, but not be limited to, notification to the community and hosting informational meetings to explain the site assessment process, findings, and cleanup/reuse plans.

Upon final site selection, sites will be assigned to one of RIDEM's five pre-approved Technical Assistance Contractors to initiate assessment activities. Environmental site assessment (ESA) activities under this grant will include a minimum of 2 Phase I ESAs, 2 Phase II ESAs, and associated cleanup planning tasks at 2 sites for both hazardous substances and petroleum, for a total of 12 assessment tasks. All tasks can typically be completed within the grant period. As part of this process, RIDEM works with communities/developers to establish reuse goals and coordinate cleanup goals and technologies into proposed site plans. RIDEM does not plan on implementing area wide planning as part of this grant because our target area, the entire state, is beyond the scope of this type of grant.

To date, RIDEM has initiated or completed over 60 TBAs throughout Rhode Island with the help of federal and state funding, the majority of which have been redeveloped or are in the process of being redeveloped. Due to the fact that RIDEM is able to significantly leverage other funding sources, over 95 percent of this grant award will be utilized directly for site assessments and cleanup planning.

**2.b.i Budget for EPA Funding**

**HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES (HS) AND PETROLEUM (Pet.)**

Budget Categories	Project Tasks				
	Task I : 2 HS and 2 Pet. Phase I ESAs & community engagement activities	Task II : 2 HS and 2 Pet. Phase II ESAs & community engagement activities	Task III: 2 HS and 2 Pet. Cleanup Planning & community engagement activities	Task IV: Travel for 2 staff to EPA Brownfields Conferences and meetings	Total
<i>Programmatic Costs</i>					
<i>Personnel</i>	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Fringe Benefits</i>	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Travel – HS</i>	-	-	-	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500
<i>Travel - Pet</i>	-	-	-	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500
<i>Equipment</i>	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Supplies</i>	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Contractual – HS</i>	\$ 10,000	\$ 150,000	\$ 37,500	-	\$ 197,500
<i>Contractual – Pet.</i>	\$ 10,000	\$ 150,000	\$ 37,500	-	\$ 197,500
<i>Other</i>	-	-	-	-	-
<b><i>Total</i></b>	<b>\$20,000</b>	<b>\$ 300,000</b>	<b>\$ 75,000</b>	<b>\$ 5,000</b>	<b>\$ 400,000</b>



The majority of site assessment activities will be carried out by State approved Technical Assistance Contractors (Contractor) (see Section 2.c.i Staff Expertise and Qualifications below for details), thereby providing job retention. Cost estimates are based upon actual costs for projects which have been completed during 2011 for similar work conducted under existing TBA contracts. In the event that costs come in over-budget, costs will be covered by 128(a), state funds or EPA assessment grants.

Specific Hazardous Substances and Petroleum tasks are as follows:

<b>Task I – Phase I Site Assessment</b>	RIDEM proposes conducting a minimum of 2 HS and 2 Pet. Phase I ESAs (projected output) at a cost of approximately \$5,000 each for a total of \$2,000. Phase I ESAs will be conducted in accordance with EPA's All Appropriate Inquiry requirements and ASTM E1527-05 requirements. Copies of all Phase I ESA Reports will be provided to the TBA applicant, property owner (if different than applicant), potential buyer (if applicable) and EPA Region I within 30 days of completion. At the completion of the Phase I, and in accordance with RIDEM regulations, Community Engagement activities for Environmental Justice and school/park citing will be carried out.
<b>Task II – Phase II Site Assessment</b>	RIDEM proposes to conduct a minimum of 2 HS and 2 Pet. Phase II ESAs (projected output) at a cost of approx. \$75,000 each for a total of \$300,000. Phase II ESAs will be conducted in accordance with an EPA Region I approved Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) and RIDEM <i>Remediation Regulation</i> . Results will be compiled in a final assessment report and copies provided to the TBA applicant, property owner and potential buyer (if applicable), RIDEM and EPA Region I within 30 days of completion. Community Engagement activities, as per the RIDEM <i>Remediation Regulations</i> , will be conducted under this task.
<b>Task III – Cleanup Planning Activities</b>	RIDEM proposes to conduct cleanup planning at a minimum of 2 HS and 2 Pet. sites (projected output) at a cost of approximately \$18,750 each for a total of \$75,000. Cleanup planning tasks may include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abutter Notification/Public Notice</li> <li>• Limited Remedial Design Investigation &amp; Report</li> <li>• Remedial Soil Management Plan</li> <li>• Post-remedial Soil Management Plan</li> <li>• Public Meeting &amp; 30 Day Public Notice Period</li> <li>• Remedial Action Work Plan &amp; Remedial Planning</li> <li>• Environmental Land Usage Restriction Draft</li> <li>• Remedial Alternatives Analysis &amp; cost estimates</li> </ul>
<b>Task IV – Travel</b>	This task includes funding for travel for 2 staff to attend one EPA Brownfields Conference. Estimated costs (airfare and travel/lodging/per diem) are up to \$5,000 depending on the location.

**2.b.ii Tracking and Measuring Progress**

To determine if the work conducted under this grant is achieving the expected outcomes, RIDEM intends to continue submitting quarterly reports and completing Property Profile forms in ACRES to track/measure progress. RIDEM also tracks and closely manages all project and grant expenses/budgets. Outputs/Outcomes are listed in the Work Plan provided to EPA at the inception of each grant and reported and tracked in each quarterly report:

<b>Activities (Commitments) For Hazardous Substance and Petroleum</b>	<b>Expected Timeframe (FFY Quarter)</b>	<b>Outputs: Projected Results of Activities &amp; Reporting</b>	<b>Outcomes: Projected Environmental Improvement</b>
<b>Conduct Site Prioritization</b> Statewide, concentrating on the 10 communities with populations of less than 10,000	1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter FY 2012	Provides reasonable estimate of Brownfield properties Statewide available to take advantage of assessment grant/funding	Identify priority sites Statewide for Phase I and Phase II Environmental Site Assessment activities
<b>Conduct Phase I Assessments</b> on properties identified in the site prioritization. Receive EPA approval for site selection prior to Phase I activity.	Initiate 2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter FY 2012  Complete 3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter FY 2012	Eligibility determinations; Phase I assessment reports, property profile forms	Number of properties assessed = 4 or more. Estimated number of property acres available for reuse or continued use = 40 (average 10 acres each)

<b>Conduct Phase II Assessments</b> after receipt of EPA approval for site selection	Initiate 3rd Quarter FY 2012  Complete 2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter FY 2014	QAPPs; Phase II Assessment Reports; property profile forms	Number of properties assessed = 4 or more. Estimated number of property acres available for reuse or continued use = 40 (10 acres each)
<b>Conduct Cleanup Planning</b>	Initiate 2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter FY 2014  Completed by end of grant period (4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter FY 2014	Completion of Remedial Action Work Plans, property profile forms	Number of properties with completed cleanup plan = 4 or more. Estimated number of property acres available for reuse or continued use = 40 (10 acres each)

RIDEM recognizes the importance of meeting expected outputs and outcomes, and that the ability to track and measure these is a reflection of the success of the program. As such, RIDEM intends to complete Property Profile forms in ACRES on a quarterly basis and closely track present/future tasks to be carried out under this grant. Grant tasks to be tracked include the number of acres assessed and the associated deliverables, such as the number of Phase I assessments, the number of Phase II assessments, and the number of cleanup plans (completed). Future elements to be tracked may include the number of acres cleaned up and put back to reuse, number of jobs created, acres of greenspace created, and private and public money leveraged.

### 2.b.iii Leveraging

RIDEM has the ability to leverage funds from several different sources, as shown in the following table:

Source of Leveraged Funding	Amount of Leveraged Funding annually	Use of Leveraged Funds	Letter of Commitment
128(a)	\$75,000	Personnel	Yes
128(a)	\$100,000	Assessment and Remedial Assistance	Yes
State NRDC Funds	\$100,000 to \$200,000	Assessment and Remedial Assistance	Yes

RIDEM currently has the ability to leverage 128(a) funds through its Brownfields State and Tribal Cooperative Agreement with EPA, as well as funds available under its Natural Resource Damage Claim settlements. Supporting documentation is provided in Attachment D. Our 128(a) grant will be utilized for all cooperative agreement and personnel oversight costs, allowing allocation of over 95% of this grant to assessment work. RIDEM's TBA program budget typically includes \$100,000 annually allocated from its 128(a) grant, and up to \$200,000 annually allocated from its State funding for contractual expenses to conduct assessment and remedial assistance work. Utilizing these various sources of funding and through intense project management, RIDEM is able to continue to build its TBA program, providing assessment funding in real time to see redevelopment projects through to remediation, and providing remedial assistance when project shortfalls exist; however, current funding sources are not enough to initiate all assessment projects currently awaiting funding, necessitating the need for additional sources of funding such as the EPA Brownfields Assessment grants in order for the program to continue its success.

RIDEM also works with applicants to leverage funding sources they may have available in order to complete these redevelopment projects and bring the sites into complete reuse. Additional funding sources available to applicants either during or after assessment may include EPA Cleanup Grants and Revolving Loan Funds, Rhode Island Economic Development Corporation Grants and Revolving Loan Fund, Housing and Urban Development grants, Community Development Block Grants, US Department of Agriculture grants, US Economic Development Administration funding, and grants/loans from Rhode Island Housing.

## **2.c Programmatic Capability and Past Performance**

### **2.c.i Programmatic Capability**

The RIDEM TBA program is operated under RIDEM's Office of Waste Management (RIDEM-OWM). The program is managed by Cynthia Gianfrancesco, a Principal Environmental Scientist and Certified Hazardous Materials Manager, who has worked for RIDEM for over 23 years in hazardous waste and site assessment/remediation programs. Ms. Gianfrancesco has been managing EPA grant funded programs since 1990, including the Superfund Pre-Remedial Program, the TBA program, and Brownfields Assessment Grant program, all of which the majority of funding is dedicated to carrying out site assessments. Ms. Gianfrancesco reports to Matthew DeStefano, a Supervising Engineer, who assists with managing the grant, site specific decisions and federal and state reporting requirements. The Site Remediation Section currently employs 12 engineers and scientists that support RIDEM's Brownfields Program whose experience can be drawn upon. RIDEM's Office of Management Services is dedicated to RIDEM's financial management and handles the financial details of all EPA grants. Some grant management activities, such as assistance with ACRES reporting and budget tracking, have been tasked to one of the State Technical Assistance Contractors. Ms. Gianfrancesco is dedicated to the TBA program; however, the unlikely event that Ms. Gianfrancesco vacates her position, another qualified person will step in to manage the program.

The majority of TBA work, including compilation of the Phase I assessments, Quality Assurance Project Plans (QAPP), Phase II assessment field work and Targeted Brownfields Assessment Reports is carried out by a RIDEM Technical Assistance Contractors. The Contractors are pre-qualified environmental professionals who are selected to participate in the State of RI Master Price Agreement (MPA) #309 for site assessment and remediation activities after going through a public bid process which complies with the Federal procurement procedures contained in 40 CFR 31.36. Contractors are selected for a period of three years with three annual renewals after being pre-qualified for technical capability and their rates pre-approved. Contractors are selected from the MPA on a site-by-site basis. As a cost saving measure, these Contractors have all been required by RIDEM to possess a Region I approved Generic Brownfields QAPP, so that each project only needs a Site Specific QAPP Addendum. This has allowed additional funding to be available for actual assessment work at sites. RIDEM staff and the Contractors will be dedicated to carrying out all assessment activities under this grant.

### **2.c.ii Adverse Audits**

Based on information from RIDEM's Office of Management Services, there have been no adverse findings reported.

### **2.c.iii Past Performance**

RIDEM-OWM currently manages two EPA Brownfields Assessment Grants and one 128(a) grant, as well as over 70 other federal grants annually for which the accounting is managed by RIDEM's Office of Management Services. RIDEM's OWM has been managing EPA Cooperative Agreement grants since 1985 with the first Superfund Pre-Remedial Multi-Site Cooperative Agreement. Since that time, RIDEM has managed annual cooperative agreements, including Superfund National Priority List, CORE, Superfund Pre-Remedial, Brownfields 128(a), and Brownfield Assessment grants. The five most recent Brownfields grant received by RIDEM-OWM currently have or are on schedule to expend all funds on or before the end of the grant period, as follows:

Grant Name	Grant Period	Original Funded Amount	Balance of Funds as of 11/15/11	Approx. amount of funding allocated	Approx. % of Work Plan Tasks Completed
FY2010 Section 128(a)	10/1/10 – 12/31/11	\$1,112,000	\$ 50,000	100%	>85%
FY2007 Brownfields Assessment Grant – Hazardous Substances	10/1/07-9/30/11	\$ 200,000	\$ 0	100%	100%
FY2008 Brownfields Assessment Grant – - Hazardous Substances - Petroleum	10/1/08-12/31/11	\$ 200,000 \$ 200,000	\$ 0 \$ 0	100% 100 %	100% 100%
FY2009 Brownfields Coalition Assessment Grant	8/4/09 – 8/4/12	\$1,000,000	\$ 442,000	100%	60%
FY2011 Brownfields Assessment Grant – - Hazardous Substances - Petroleum	10/1/11 – 9/30/14	\$200,000 \$200,000	\$200,000 \$200,000	100% >50%	10% 10%

Compliance with Grant Requirements: For each of these grants, RIDEM has consistently met the Terms and Conditions of the grants, is current on submittals of all quarterly reports/financial status reports, and is up-to-date with ACRES data inputs and all required submittals. For all grants, RIDEM has substantially completed or is on schedule to complete all work plan tasks and has completed the majority of expected results - or more - under each grant.

Accomplishments: RIDEM's TBA program has been providing brownfields assessment assistance to municipalities, tribes and non-profit organizations since 1996. RIDEM has been managing EPA Brownfields cooperative agreements since 1996, including the Brownfields Showcase Community Pilot from 1998 through 2002. RIDEM has also been the recipient of EPA's 128(a) grant since 2003 which currently provides over \$1 million annually to support our brownfields programs. RIDEM's OWM has also managed over \$1 million in TBA funding since 1999.

With the help of federal funding, RIDEM currently has 22 TBAs ongoing and has completed 40 TBAs for municipalities and non-profit organizations to date, the majority of which have been redeveloped or are in the process of being redeveloped. All accomplishments have been reported to EPA through quarterly reports and ACRES. RIDEM has established a successful methodology for soliciting and selecting sites for assessments under these grants (See Section 2.a.i for details). Site selection criteria has been and will continue to be determined based upon RIDEM's TBA application and prioritization system which is currently in use. Currently, RIDEM has on file approximately 10 TBA applications and intends to initiate approximately half of those assessments within the next year, leaving the remaining essentially unfunded until additional funding can be obtained. Through the extensive outreach efforts which RIDEM conducts, municipalities and non-profit organizations have come to depend on RIDEM's TBA program and are able to successfully redevelop properties for beneficial reuse.

Our most recent success story, the new Woonsocket Middle School, was the 2011 Brownfields Renewal Award Social Impact winner. The project transformed a 20-acre, 100 year old industrial site in an Environmental Justice Area into the largest middle school campus in New England. RIDEM worked with the City of Woonsocket to assess and remediate multiple parcels, utilizing a combination of the City's EPA Assessment Grant funds, RIDEM 128(a) funds, the City's EPA Cleanup Grants, and the RI Economic Development Corporation (RIEDC) Grant and Revolving Loan Fund for a total of \$2 million in funding. RIDEM is now conducting a TBA at the former middle school for future redevelopment, thus providing income to the City through the sale of and future taxes on that property. With this project we hope to repeat the success of our 2005 Phoenix Award winner, the Save the Bay education center. This state-of-the-art green building constructed on a former landfill, transformed a once-blighted area into productive reuse for the community, with classrooms, exhibits, meeting rooms and administrative spaces, demonstrating principals of stormwater management, coastal buffer plantings and salt marsh restoration. The RIDEM TBA program has also

recently recognized its primary grant manager, Cynthia Gianfrancesco, as a Brownfields Renewal Person of the Year Nominee in 2011. Cynthia was also the recipient of an EPA Environmental Merit Award in 2009.

### 3. Community Engagement and Partnerships

#### 3.a Community Engagement Plan

As the leading state agency for environmental affairs in the State of Rhode Island, RIDEM is experienced with the process of notifying and engaging the public in high-priority environment and land use decisions which will have significant local impacts. In addition, RIDEM's well-established brownfields program has developed cooperative partnerships with numerous organizations and other state entities focused on brownfields revitalization.

RIDEM is fully committed to developing all appropriate avenues to engage the community in the execution of this grant award. Community outreach and stakeholder involvement is essential to the success of this funding opportunity. RIDEM, in partnership with community leaders and the CBOs listed herein, plans to educate residents and stakeholders about the process of prioritizing and assessing potential brownfield properties. Comments which are received will be reviewed and, as appropriate, incorporated into the decision making process. In addition, the Environmental Justice requirements of RIDEM's *Remediation Regulations*, which focus on creating timely and effective processes for on-going engagement, will be adhered to. In partnership with its CBOs, RIDEM will use a combination of the following approaches for community engagement:

- Factsheets/flyers for soliciting continued community engagement.
- Open stakeholder meetings with municipal officials, interested members of the public, and organizations in a meeting location convenient to affected residents/organizations will be held upon reaching major milestones.
- Local media (newspaper & TV) will be updated periodically with press releases and official notices.
- Social media tools (e.g. Twitter)/Key websites will be kept up-to-date with the latest information.
- A single point of contact within RIDEM to ensure continuous engagement with the public.
- Utilize RIDEM's full time Press & Communications Office to notify and engage the public.

Updated information will be disseminated (in as many languages as needed) to impacted residents and CBOs in a timely manner so as to ensure the public is fully aware of the progress of the project. In the process of establishing an open dialogue, environmental justice will be a key objective to provide improved lines of communication with harder-to-reach individuals. RIDEM is sensitive to the fact that not all persons affected by this proposal have regular access to a computer, and as such, will make every attempt to not over-rely on web based outreach efforts. The Department's relationship with the Environmental Justice League of RI can be utilized to promote outreach when necessary. RIDEM will: be sensitive to cultural differences & disabled individuals who want to participate in the execution of this project; proactively collaborate with residents, community leaders and CBOs to ensure we are appropriately responding to comments and information is being provided in a manner that is helpful to the public; and, identify one point person, Cynthia Gianfrancesco, to handle all inquiries.

#### 3.b Plan to Develop Partnerships

RIDEM is the primary state agency which holds jurisdiction over protection of human health and the environment in the State of Rhode Island, and as such, has a great deal of expertise in this area. Due to Rhode Island's small size, there are no local or county environmental or health agencies. The RI Department of Health (RIDOH) is frequently asked to become involved in projects where human health issues are complex and additional information needs to be disseminated to the public. The two agencies routinely cooperate on key public outreach efforts.

All assessment and cleanup planning activities will be conducted under RIDEM's Voluntary Cleanup Program (VCP) in accordance with the *Remediation Regulations* and other applicable regulations. The purpose of the *Remediation Regulations* is to create an integrated program requiring reporting, investigation and remediation of contaminated sites in order to eliminate and/or control threats to human health and the environment, both on and off of the site. To ensure openness and transparency in the process, RIDEM recently (November 2011) made significant amendments in the *Remediation Regulations* specific to the promotion of public involvement in the site remediation decision making process. Brownfield assessment sites will proceed through RIDEM's VCP process as follows:

- Phase I is completed, Site Specific QAPP addendum prepared and EPA approval obtained.
- Public notice conducted (w/ public meeting & comment period if EJ area, school, daycare, etc.).
- Field work conducted and completes TBA Report, with remedial alternatives and cost estimates, completed.
- RIDEM issues Program Letter to performing party and conducts second public notice period.
- RIDEM issues Remedial Decision Letter, completes remedial planning and Remedial Action Work Plan.
- RIDEM issues Remedial Approval Letter to performing party.
- Performing Party then proceeds with remediation and redevelopment under the close oversight of RIDEM's VCP until completion, at which time a Letter of Compliance is issued.

RIDEM was instrumental in assisting Groundwork Providence with recently obtaining a FY2010 EPA Brownfields Job Training Grant, serves on an advisory committee to oversee the programmatic management of the grant. It is the goal of Groundwork Providence to recruit a maximum of 120 program applicants, enroll a minimum of 60 trainees and produce a minimum of 52 graduates. RIDEM and its technical assistance contractors will continue to provide valuable classroom instruction on various brownfields topics to students enrolled in the training. Groundwork Providence is a committed partner to our grant proposal as is evidenced by their willingness to sign-on as a CBO.

**3.c Community Based Organizations** - See Appendix C for letters from CBOs RIDEM will partner with on this grant.

	Description, Role, Makeup, Services Provided & Working Relationship During the Grant
Groundwork Providence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As an EPA Environmental Job Training grant recipient, Groundwork Providence is an environmental organization providing urban residents with the skills/resources needed to improve neighborhoods.</li> <li>• It is experienced in offering hands-on workshops on brownfields remediation, sustainable landscaping, and tree-planting in environmental justice communities.</li> <li>• RIDEM will look to Groundwork to prepare fact-sheets on sustainable development practices and foster greater communication with municipalities on key sustainability issues.</li> </ul>
Grow Smart Rhode Island	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Statewide non-profit public interest group representing a broad coalition of business/non-profit/government partners fighting sprawl &amp; leading the charge for better-managed growth.</li> <li>• It is experienced in offering training workshops on issues like responsible land use decisions &amp; creating affordable housing in local communities.</li> <li>• Will leverage its communication resources &amp; member network to promote brownfields remediation projects &amp; participate in public meetings.</li> </ul>
Brown University Superfund Research Program (SRP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comprehensive research &amp; outreach program designed to seek solutions to the complex health/environmental issues associated with hazardous waste sites.</li> <li>• Brown University's SRP communicates health hazards, guides plans for reuse of contaminated sites, &amp; increases the capacity of state agencies &amp; community groups.</li> <li>• RIDEM will look to Brown University to help identify sites, utilize students for any necessary research or similar tasks &amp; communicate with the public about the risks from contaminated sites.</li> </ul>
East Bay Community Development Corporation (CDC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A housing non-profit whose mission is to provide affordable housing for families &amp; seniors. Active in the East Bay area of RI, it was originally founded to energize &amp; revive the blighted area surrounding a particular mill development in Bristol, RI.</li> <li>• RIDEM will look to the East Bay CDC to help identify sites, host meetings in their community room &amp; provide translation services (particularly Portuguese).</li> </ul>

<b>Save the Bay</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RI's premiere non-profit environmental organization with a large statewide membership. Founded to protect and promote the conservation of Narragansett Bay.</li> <li>Through their community &amp; family-based education programs, Save the Bay is active in all major environmental issues in RI, including coastal brownfields redevelopment &amp; the protection of open space. Has multiple facilities around RI that can be utilized for outreach.</li> <li>RIDEM will look to Save the Bay to educate communities about the benefits of redevelopment &amp; utilize its outreach capacity to disseminate information about redevelopment opportunities.</li> </ul>
<b>Housing Network RI</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The state association of non-profit community development corporations. Its members have developed thousands of affordable housing units &amp; initiated many revitalization efforts in blighted neighborhoods.</li> <li>Maintains deep roots in many RI communities &amp; worked with RIDEM on the development of community engagement/public involvement amendments to RIDEM's Remediation Regulations (Nov. 2011).</li> <li>Will leverage its resources to distribute outreach material, help identify sites &amp; incorporate information about brownfields into its Homeownership Connection curriculum.</li> </ul>
<b>The Community Development Consortium</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Formed in 1996, its primary role is to manage the Small Cities Community Development Block Grant programs of its member towns in more rural southern RI, which is scattered with old mill villages.</li> <li>Will leverage resources to help identify sites, facilitate owner's involvement, coordinate access to sites, invite RIDEM to public meetings, &amp; dedicate local financial resources as necessary.</li> </ul>

#### 4. Project Benefits

##### 4.a Welfare and/or Public Health

Every city and town in the State of Rhode Island has blighted neighborhoods which are in need of revitalization. The first step in that effort can typically be the remediation of a brownfields site in a neighborhood, particularly in suburban/urban areas (populations of less than 10,000) and areas impacted by the historic 2010 flood. These areas are frequently along rivers and have associated mill villages, which this grant will concentrate on. As part of the brownfields redevelopment efforts initiated under this grant, residents of these neighborhoods will see multiple environmental, social and public health benefits both during and beyond the life of this grant. Through an ongoing relationship with municipal leaders statewide, RIDEM will work with property owners and community leaders to ensure this funding will bring the maximum level of benefits to sensitive populations. RIDEM's Environmental Justice requirements will ensure that residents have the opportunity to participate in redevelopment projects to prevent gentrification and allow for equitable development. In addition, three neighborhoods in RI have been designated KeepSpace neighborhoods. As a KeepSpace partner, RIDEM encourages the mission of working together in diverse partnerships with a spirit of respect, collaboration and cooperation to create a healthy, prosperous, sustainable future for residents. Through the KeepSpace program, residents are able to have meaningful participation in the future outcomes of development in their neighborhoods and ensure that gentrification and equitable development issues are adequately addressed.

This Brownfield Assessment Grant will help further connect RIDEM staff, and their collective expertise, with communities statewide in such a way that fosters cooperative relationships focused on issues of the utmost important to residents and leaders: community development, job creation, historic preservation, business growth, improved public safety, new open space, greenspace and recreational opportunities, the elimination of environmental blight and prevention of gentrification.

RIDEM understands that protecting sensitive populations from project contaminants during assessments is a priority. As such, all investigation work plans will have a health & safety plan component to help prevent exposure. Specific methods include the use of direct push technologies for collection of soil/groundwater samples, which prevent the release of contaminants. If more intrusive methods are required, applicable dust/odor control measures will be followed. In heavily populated areas, flag persons will be posted and temporary fencing will be erected as needed.

Welfare and public health outcomes/benefits include:

<b>Environmental Benefits</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Historically, numerous contaminants have been identified in these areas, including heavy metals, PCBs, chlorinated VOCs, semi-volatile organic compounds, and petroleum. Due to the fact that many of these sites are adjacent to/upgradient from rivers and Narragansett Bay, reduction of water quality impacts will be ongoing as sites are remediated.</li> <li>Rivers are an important part of the urban and rural ecosystem, and serve as an important fisheries/recreational resource. Residents will benefit from the reclamation of these key resources and their scenic and recreational value.</li> <li>The historic floods of March 2010 have created numerous new brownfields sites along the rivers and flood zones, leaving already blighted areas in even worse condition as flooded properties were abandoned and potentially contaminated sediment was deposited. Remediation of these properties will help to kick-start revitalization.</li> <li>Remediation incorporates methods which reduce impacts to groundwater, surface runoff and migration of contaminants to neighboring properties; will remove physical/chemical exposure risks.</li> </ul>
<b>Social/Welfare Benefits</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Designing the community for improved community/public safety.</li> <li>Improved quality of life via a reduced number of underutilized properties.</li> <li>Increased number of clean/affordable housing units; increased number of local jobs.</li> <li>Stimulating local minority business growth; ensuring historic preservation.</li> <li>Pedestrian/streetscape improvements; improved traffic and parking management strategies.</li> <li>Increase in civic pride, resident voice/municipal participation via holistic place-making techniques.</li> </ul>
<b>Public Health Benefits</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A reduction in the number of abandoned and deteriorated sites/structures that pose clear health and safety risks (e.g. mill fires in densely populated areas) for community residents.</li> <li>Asthma reductions due to improved air quality &amp; reduction in childhood lead poisoning levels.</li> <li>Overall reduction of exposure pathways (e.g. vapor intrusion, dermal contact).</li> <li>Decreased risk associated with contact with impaired waters in the local neighborhoods.</li> </ul>

In addition, RIDEM has identified numerous municipalities statewide as Environmental Justice Area as defined in RIDEM's *Remediation Regulations*. These regulations require informational signage at the site and call for meaningful public involvement during investigation and cleanup. For residents living/working in Environmental Justices Areas impacted by actual/suspected environmental contamination, implementation of RIDEM's Environmental Justice regulations will provide the benefit of predictable opportunities for meaningful participation.

**4.b. Economic Benefits and/or Greenspace**

**4.b.i Economic Benefits**

Since we do not know at this time which projects will be initiated under this grant, as we are a state agency providing this benefit to municipalities, it is more appropriate to describe the *potential* economic benefits of assessing/cleaning-up/redeveloping sites than to attempt to provide quantitative estimates of the associated economic benefits. The economic benefits brought about by the revitalization of just one brownfields site in a blighted area can be far reaching. From creating jobs to increasing tax bases, the funding provided through this grant can be the catalyst needed to jump-start a major redevelopment project. In addition, by stabilizing real estate values and reducing vacancy rates through redevelopment, lenders are more likely to provide funding for surrounding redevelopment projects. The benefits of bringing this type of positive development to depressed and underinvested areas can go a long way towards reducing not only visible and aesthetic blight, but also real economic and environmental threats. Funding for site assessments in these areas will remove one of the key financial barriers to the redevelopment of these properties and stimulate ongoing area-wide development.



#### **4.b.ii Non-Economic Benefits**

Throughout Rhode Island there are countless opportunities for the assessment and redevelopment of brownfields into greenspaces, greenways, and recreational access points in ways that will provide multiple benefits for residents. RIDEM promotes the importance of access to our natural resources and the TBA program encourages applications for redevelopment of properties for open space, recreational facilities and for non-profit/governmental purposes by awarding extra points in the application scoring criteria for projects which include an open space component.

Under RIDEM's current TBA program, over half of the projects initiated over the past five years include a component for open space for active or passive recreation, or use by a non-profit or municipality. The work done as part of the TBA program has provided these applicants with the information they need to continue planning for greenspace and community projects, and we intend to continue to facilitate the creation of greenspace under this grant. Examples of redevelopment projects which have been completed with the help of RIDEM's TBA program for use as greenspace, municipal or non-profit activities, include the establishment of a senior center, a new middle school, a historic interpretive park and canoe launch, affordable housing units, and creation of a resource/housing center for formerly incarcerated individuals. These projects typically take place in areas where the service is greatly needed but where the value of "clean" property makes it infeasible to initiate. By supporting these kinds of projects, brownfields assessments conducted under this grant can help provide services which otherwise might not be available.

#### **4.c Environmental Benefits from Infrastructure Reuse/Sustainable Reuse**

Globally, there has been a heightened interest in sustainable reuse and smart growth as a way for communities to guide development. As a partner in the KeepSpace initiative, whose mission is to create a healthy and sustainable future, RIDEM gives priority to projects which incorporate sustainability. Many of these components - green building, energy/resource efficiency, historic preservation and green renovation/deconstruction, innovative storm water controls, low-impact development, mixed-use - already characterize village redevelopment. The statewide benefits of focusing growth in areas adequately served by existing infrastructure is currently captured in the state's key statewide planning document, *Land Use 2025, the Rhode Island State Land Use Policies and Plan*. Priority will be given to those communities identified within that plan. This plan (last updated April 2006) places particular emphasis on using incentives to steer future growth to those places that can best accommodate sustainable growth, including our village centers. Groundwork Providence has committed to develop a fact-sheet on sustainable development practices to be widely distributed to municipal & non-profit developers, and to provide pro bono consulting on sustainability practices.

RIDEM's TBA application prioritizes projects which incorporate infrastructure and sustainable reuse, as is evidenced by the inclusion of a specific question and extra points earned for projects which incorporate these technologies. The majority of older villages/former mill areas in Rhode Island are served by existing infrastructure, including public transit and all utilities. Only 60% of Rhode Island is serviced by public water and sewers. While we will attempt to concentrate our project funding in rural/suburban areas, many rural areas which rely on private wells for drinking water and septic disposal systems for waste disposal typically find redevelopment a challenge; therefore, those rural areas with full utility services (including water and sewers) that capitalize on these advantages will be given priority over those that do not have public water and sewers. This will result in redevelopment activities where all infrastructures exist, being less costly and minimizing the need to expand utilities into greenspace areas.

While final redevelopment of properties selected for assessment under this grant is controlled by municipalities, it is our hope that incorporating key principles of sustainable reuse and smart growth into the development decisions of these projects will help foster the type of forward thinking and progressive leadership communities need to help assess and revitalize brownfields - the health and well-being on RI's communities depends upon it.

## Attachment A

### Threshold Criteria:

1. Applicant Eligibility: The Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (“RIDEM”) is a government entity created by the Rhode Island General Assembly and is eligible to apply for funding through EPA’s Brownfields Assessment Grant Program. RIDEM’s enabling statute can be found at R.I. Gen. Laws Chapter 42-17.1.
2. Letter from State or Tribal Environmental Authority: Not required. Applicant is the Rhode Island state environmental authority (RIDEM). Implementation by RIDEM will ensure efficient compliance with state regulations and will facilitate interactions with other state programs to support redevelopment.
3. Site Eligibility and Property Ownership Eligibility: This is an application for Community-wide assessment funding, therefore information on site eligibility is not necessary and has not been included. Eligibility determinations will be made on a site-by-site basis, subject to EPA review and approval, as sites are identified.

## Attachment B

### Special Considerations Checklist

Please identify (with an **X**) if any of the below items apply to your community or your project as described in your proposal. EPA will verify these disclosures prior to selection of the grant.

- Community population is 10,000 or less
- Federally recognized Indian tribe
- United States territory
- Applicant assisting a Tribe or territory
- Targeted brownfield sites are impacted by mine-scarred land
- Targeted brownfield sites are contaminated with controlled substances
- Community is impacted by recent natural disaster(s)
- Project is primarily focusing on Phase II assessments
- Community demonstrates firm leveraging commitments for facilitating brownfield project completion by identifying amounts and contributors of funding in the proposal and have included documentation
- Community experiencing plant closures (or other significant economic disruptions), including communities experiencing auto plant closures due to bankruptcy
- Applicant is a recipient of a HUD/DOT/EPA Partnership for Sustainable Communities grant (as part of KeepSpace).

## Attachment C

### Letters from Community Based Organizations

*Please contact Cynthia Gianfrancesco at [cynthia.gianfrancesco@dem.ri.gov](mailto:cynthia.gianfrancesco@dem.ri.gov) if you wish to access this information.*

## Attachment D

### Leveraging Documentation

*Please contact Cynthia Gianfrancesco at [cynthia.gianfrancesco@dem.ri.gov](mailto:cynthia.gianfrancesco@dem.ri.gov) if you wish to access this information.*