

DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
RFP # B00223**

**PLANNING SERVICES
WEST END REVITALIZATION STRATEGY**

April 12, 2023, 2:00 PM

ADDENDUM #1

March 29, 2023

TO ALL POTENTIAL BIDDERS:

The following information is being provided for purposes of clarification or in response to questions received from potential bidders. This addendum is being posted on the eVA website and City website at the following links:

- eVA website: <https://mvendor.cgieva.com/Vendor/public/AllOpportunities.jsp>
- City website: <https://www.ci.staunton.va.us/departments/finance/procurement>

This posting consists of the RFP Questions and Answers, Attachment A – Staunton EPA Grant Narrative, and Attachment B – West End Community Meeting Notes.

RFP Questions & Answers

1. Can you please describe what support may be provided by City staff during this project?
 - The role of City staff will be established during the “kick-off” meeting. It will primarily be of an advisory role.
2. Could you please share the total budget for the consultant’s services for this project?
 - The budget will be determined by the selected consultant’s proposal.
3. Page 4, Item 12. Under section III. SCOPE OF WORK: Can you please elaborate on the scope of the branding initiatives? The statement refers to recommendations and implementation strategies, but we would like confirmation that the scope does not include, for example, the design motifs, slogans/taglines, wayfinding, a logo or a color scheme for the area.

- The Revitalization Study shall include recommendations on implementing marketing strategies, but does not include the design of motifs, slogans/taglines, wayfinding, logo or a color scheme for the area.
4. Is there any direction on how the brownfields study specifically relates to this study?
 - The EPA Brownfields study will conduct environmental assessments on selected properties. This information will be with the consultant selected to undertake the West End Revitalization Strategy. Attachment A is the initial grant narrative.
 5. When will the brownfields study be complete and is there any existing community outreach data from that effort that can be shared or used in this study?
 - The City is in the first year of a 3-year process.
 6. Under the scope of work, the firm will define the boundary of the West End. Does the city currently have a defined geographic boundary for the West End that the consulting firm should use as a starting point to further define the area of study as required by “III Scope of Work #4”?
 - The city does have basic boundary for the West End that is based on the boundaries of the City’s only Opportunity Zone.
 7. Can you provide a direct link to the aforementioned ‘West End EPA Brownfields study’?
 - The City does not have a webpage with the EPA Brownfield study information. The selected consultant will be provided specific information requested to assist in the preparation of the West End Revitalization Study.
 8. Are there additional documents related to the West End that the city can provide?
 - No.
 9. Have there been any prior community engagement meetings related to the revitalization of the West End? If so, how many and are there publicly available records of these meetings?
 - There were 3 community meetings. Attachment B are the notes from the three meeting.



DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

PROPOSAL FOR USEPA'S COMMUNITY-WIDE BROWNFIELDS ASSESSMENT GRANT
RFP NO. EPA-OLEM-OBLR-20-06/ CFDA NO. 66.818

Section IV.D. – Narrative Information Sheet
October 28, 2020

1. Applicant Identification

City of Staunton, Virginia

Physical Address: 116 West Beverley Street, 3rd Floor
Staunton, VA 24401-4285

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 58
Staunton, VA 24402-0058

2. Funding Requested

a. Assessment Grant Type: Community-Wide

b. Federal Funds Requested:

- i. \$300,000
- ii. N/A – Not Site Specific

3. Location: Staunton, Virginia (Independent City)

4. Property Information for Site-Specific Proposals: N/A- Not Site Specific

5. Contacts

a. Project Director / AOR

William L. "Billy" Vaughn, Director

Department of Community & Economic Development

Physical Address: 116 West Beverley Street, 3rd Floor
Staunton, VA 24401-4285

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 58
Staunton, VA 24402-0058

Phone: 540-332-3862

Email: vaughnwl@ci.staunton.va.us

b. Chief Executive/Highest Ranking Elected Official

Hon. Andrea Oakes, Mayor

Staunton City Council

Physical Address: 116 West Beverley Street, 3rd Floor
Staunton, VA 24401-4285

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 58
Staunton, VA 24402-0058

Phone: 540-849-6917

Email: oakesaw@ci.staunton.va.us

6. Population: 24,452 (US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2014-2018)

7. Other Factors Checklist

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 brownfield 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).	2
The priority site(s) is in a federally designated flood plain.	2
The reuse of the priority site(s) will facilitate renewable energy from wind, solar, or geothermal energy; or will incorporate energy efficiency measures.	N/A
30% or more of the overall project budget will be spent on eligible reuse planning activities for priority brownfield site(s) within the target area.	8, 9

8. Letter from the State Environmental Authority: Attached



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

Street address: 1111 E. Main Street, Suite 1400, Richmond, Virginia 23219

Mailing address: P.O. Box 1105, Richmond, Virginia 23218

www.deq.virginia.gov

Matthew J. Strickler
Secretary of Natural Resources

David K. Paylor
Director

(804) 698-4000
1-800-592-5482

September 17, 2020

Mr. William L. "Billy" Vaughn, Director
Community & Economic Development
City of Staunton
116 W. Beverley Street
Staunton, VA 24401

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

Subject: Acknowledgement and Support
USEPA's Community Wide Brownfields Assessment Grant
EPA-OLEM-OBLR-20-06
City of Staunton

Dear Mr. Vaughn:

The Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) is in receipt of your request for support to the above referenced Brownfields Grant application. The request will be for a community-wide EPA Brownfields Assessment grant for the City of Staunton. DEQ has already begun partnering with you to advance brownfields redevelopment across the community and is thrilled to add our support for the subject EPA grant proposal.

The primary target area for the Staunton Brownfields Program is the entirety of the City's two Opportunity Zones (OZs), which lie in the westernmost quadrant of the City. Known locally as West End, the area lies between Churchville Avenue/Route 250 on the north and Middlebrook Avenue/Route 252 on the south. Bisecting the two OZs is West Beverley Street/Route 254, which was a once-thriving commercial corridor that begins at the western edge of downtown at the historic Thornrose Cemetery and runs to the western city limits near the intersection of Woodrow Wilson Parkway/Route 262, a major, limited access by-pass or loop road that skirts the outer perimeter of the City.

It is our sincere hope that the subject proposal will be successful and the City will be able to leverage the funds to stimulate economic development and revitalization within the community and take full advantage of the potential Opportunity Zone investments.

Acknowledgement and Support
USEPA's Community Wide Brownfields Assessment Grant
EPA-OLEM-OBLR-20-06
City of Staunton

If I can be of further assistance, please don't hesitate to call me at (804) 698-4064.

Sincerely,



Vincent A. Maiden, CPG
Brownfields Program Coordinator

cc: Graham Simmerman – DEQ-VRO
Meade Anderson – DEQ - CO
Lori Kroll – Draper Aden

CITY OF STAUNTON, VIRGINIA
PROPOSAL FOR USEPA'S COMMUNITY-WIDE BROWNFIELDS ASSESSMENT GRANT
EPA-OLEM-OBLR-20-06 / CDFA No. 66.818
Section IV.E – Narrative / Ranking Criteria

OCTOBER 28, 2020

1. PROJECT AREA DESCRIPTION AND PLANS FOR REVITALIZATION

1.a. Target Area and Brownfields

1.a.i. Background and Description of Target Area: The City of Staunton is an independent city at the southern end of the Shenandoah Valley in western Virginia at the crossroads of Interstates 81 and 64. As one of the oldest cities west of the Blue Ridge Mountains, her history spans three centuries. The City played a crucial role in the Colonial economy and contributed to the success of the American Revolution, even serving briefly as capital of Virginia. In 1902, Staunton became an independent city and, in 1908, created the nation's first city manager form of government.

Located along Valley Pike (now US Highway 11), Staunton developed as a trade, transportation and industrial center, particularly after the Virginia Central Railroad arrived in 1854. Factories made carriages, wagons, boots and shoes, clothing and blankets, and the town became an important supply depot during the Civil War. The City boasts six designated historic districts and 30 properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places, including one National Historic Landmark, the birthplace of President Woodrow Wilson. The Wilson Presidential Library and Museum is one of the many popular attractions in the City. Staunton is also considered an institutional crossroads as home to Western State Hospital, established in 1834 and among the oldest psychiatric facilities in the nation; the Virginia School for Deaf & Blind, founded in 1839; and Mary Baldwin University, founded as Augusta Female Seminary in 1842.

The primary target area for Staunton's proposed Brownfields Program is the entirety of the City's Opportunity Zone (OZ)¹, which lies in the westernmost quadrant of the City. Known locally as ***West End***, the area lies between Churchville Avenue on the north and Middlebrook Avenue on the south. Bisecting the two OZ census tracts is West Beverley Street, a once-thriving commercial corridor that begins near downtown at the historic Thornrose Cemetery and runs to the western city limits near the intersection of Woodrow Wilson Parkway/Route 262, a limited access by-pass that skirts the outer perimeter of the City. Ironically, though much of West Beverley is reminiscent of a past automobile economy, it was construction of this bypass in the 1970's that created a catch-22 for West End. While helping move traffic more efficiently around the City, the reroute negatively impacted local commercial traffic. West Beverley Street saw a 60% drop in through traffic, from roughly 13,000 to 7,900 vehicles per day, with the opening of the bypass. With lowered traffic counts, traditional commercial businesses have seen decline and struggle to maintain their properties, which has resulted in declining property values for the entire area.

1.a.ii. Description of Priority Brownfield Sites: During preliminary review, Staunton identified over 25 sites in West End with potential to change the blighted landscape and revitalize the stagnant economy in the target area. Sites range from small gas stations/convenience stores, used car lots and tire service/auto repair shops of an acre or less; 5- to 10-acre commercial sites including warehouses and multi-unit strip malls; and larger 25- to 50-acre industrial tracts. The priority sites identified herein were expressly selected due to their potential to catalyze additional investment and revitalization of West End, as well as to extend redevelopment opportunities.

The largest priority site, former ***Unifi Manufacturing*** on Morris Mill Road, lies south of Churchville Avenue, the City's northernmost target corridor. Opened in 1960 and originally known as Fiberspun, the plant was a state-of-the-art facility and at one time employed 500 locals. After 28 prosperous years, Fiberspun was sold to Unifi in 1988 and remained productive for 20 more years. The Unifi facility closed in 2008 when operations were consolidated with a more modern facility in North

¹ Census Tract IDs: 51790000200 and 51790000300, VA Department of Housing & Community Development:
<https://www.dhcd.virginia.gov/opportunity-zones-oz>

Carolina and remains vacant. Originally situated on about 50 acres, the facility included two plants totaling almost 420,000 SF. Impacts from historic textile production could include asbestos containing material (ACM) and lead based paint (LBP); petroleum and fuel; polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs); and solvents and hazardous substances from manufacturing synthetic yarns, particularly polyester, which is made from petroleum-based chemicals such as terephthalic acid (TA) and monoethylene glycol (MEG). These constituents of concern (COCs) pose serious health risks to fetuses, babies and children, who may suffer from developmental and neurological problems, and some are considered carcinogens with long-term exposure leading to cancer, blood, liver and kidney disorders. The site's proximity to schools and residences make it a high priority for investigation and redevelopment.

A priority site in the middle of the target area on West Beverley Street, the former **Chestnut Hills Shopping Center**, now sits vacant following the loss of its last tenant, Family Dollar Store, in June 2019. Originally built in 1971, Chestnut Hills clearly represents the demise of retail in the target area after construction of the Woodrow Wilson Parkway. Property value fell by 56% between 2018 and 2019. The 10-acre site, much of which is covered with cracked asphalt pavement, includes two structures totaling 91,500 SF. With leaking roofs, both buildings continue to deteriorate. The current owner, who doesn't want to spend money repairing the buildings without a clear path to redevelopment, has noted that homeless people appear to be living in parts of the buildings. Primary COCs include ACM, LBP and toxic mold that could worsen asthma and cause other respiratory issues. Additional COCs resulting from unregulated or unreported spills from past operations, as well as off-site impacts from nearby gas stations and auto repair centers, may be identified upon further investigation. **A portion of this site's parking lot along West Beverley also lies within Special Flood Hazard Area Zone AE (1% chance base flood or 100-year flood zone).**²

On the southerly side of the target area, near the gateway to downtown, a former light industrial area known as the C&O Flats lies in the vicinity of Middlebrook Avenue and Bridge Streets, where historic railroad and warehouse properties, including an active CSX maintenance facility, have been in use since the 1800's. A priority site in this vicinity is the former **National Biscuit Company (Nabisco) Warehouse** on Bridge Street constructed between 1909 and 1914. The property totals around an acre and includes a vacant 1-story historic office/warehouse building of approximately 7,000 SF, along with outbuildings and sheds associated with the **Rose Time Scrap and Metal Recycling** facility, a former salvage yard that occupied the site until 2011. During much of the site's operational history, environmental regulations were not in place and significant releases may have gone undetected or unreported. Due to past metals and electronics recycling and proximity to the adjacent active railyard on the north and east, COC's may exist that merit evaluation. Scrap processing can result in release of metals such as mercury and lead, PCBs, volatile organic compounds (VOCs), solvents, oils, and other chemicals that can lead to birth defects, neurological/developmental issues, cancer and lung, blood and liver disorders. **Most of this site lies within Flood Zone AE³, and its southern boundary fronts Lewis Creek, an impaired waterway.**⁴

1.b. Revitalization of the Target Area

1.b.i. Reuse Strategy and Alignment with Revitalization Plans: The latest **City of Staunton Comprehensive Plan 2018-2040**,⁵ adopted in July 2019, strives to "promote rehabilitation and conservation throughout the City by reuse of existing infrastructure and buildings, revitalization of blighted and vacant properties, and redevelopment in older, high density areas with existing utilities and infrastructure." Redevelopment of each of the priority sites will also help further one or more of City Council's goals identified in their latest 10-year visioning statement, **Vision 2030**⁶, and related **3-Year Priorities** list,⁷ including those related to the built environment, such as "implementation of policies that encourage improvement, development, or replacement of blighted properties," which is particularly appropriate to West End when combined with the availability of Opportunity Funds.

² FIRM Flood Panel 51015C03338D, September 2007

³ FIRM Flood Panel 51015C03339D, September 2007

⁴ EPA Water Body Report, 2018: https://mywaterway.epa.gov/waterbody-report/21VASWCB/VAV-B12R_LEW01A00/2018

⁵ City of Staunton Comprehensive Plan 2018-2040, adopted July 11, 2019: <https://www.ci.staunton.va.us/home/showdocument?id=6446>

⁶ Staunton City Council Vision for 2030, adopted June 13, 2019: <https://www.ci.staunton.va.us/home/showdocument?id=6254>

⁷ Staunton City Council 3-Year Priorities to Accomplish 2030 Vision, adopted June 13, 2019: <https://www.ci.staunton.va.us/home/showdocument?id=6256>

An initiative specifically focused on development of a **Preliminary Revitalization Plan for West End** was undertaken in early 2020 to advance the City's current EPA Brownfields Program application. A series of community meetings was planned to gather input from target area residents, businesses and community partners in a collaborative effort to identify a shared vision and strategy for the future and develop a plan to achieve it. Although delayed due to COVID-19 restrictions, it was kicked off in early September⁸ and several follow up meetings are planned through the fall and early winter with a goal to present a draft plan for City Council consideration in spring 2021. The resulting plan for the **West End Revitalization Initiative** will include a roadmap and actionable steps toward improvements to enhance economic development opportunities and quality of life in West End.

1.b.ii. Outcomes and Benefits of Reuse Strategy: Staunton will focus assessments and redevelopment of priority sites consistent with the City's latest Comprehensive Plan, community needs, and revitalization vision. Focus will be placed on projects that redevelop vacant and/or underutilized properties to create jobs and housing opportunities, enhance quality of life for residents by providing neighborhood services, and grow the economic vitality of West End.

Reuse of the former **Unifi** facility will likely remain light industrial. It is particularly well-suited for warehouse/distribution space due to its size and location near the crossroads of I-81 for north-south bound travel and I-64 for east-west bound travel with potential to reach over two thirds of the US population within 1 day. This industry is highlighted in the latest Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)⁹ prepared in 2018 by the Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission (CSPDC), which indicates a projected 9% increase in transportation, warehousing and distribution services for the region over the next 20-30 years. Unifi is also a priority for cleanup and reuse due to its proximity to schools and residential areas and opportunities to provide good paying jobs for nearby residents within an existing footprint adjacent to similar use (Federated Auto Parts).

Redevelopment of the **Chestnut Hills Shopping Center** located in West End's rough geographic center will focus on a mixed-use, village center incorporating office, retail, neighborhood services and community space. End uses, such as high-quality daycare, after school care, youth and senior services, co-working and maker space, and indoor farmers market, would work well with the City's vision to rejuvenate West End by attracting diverse young families, retirees and seniors by focusing on safe, affordable housing well suited to the existing housing stock and walkable neighborhoods linked by a local multi-use transportation network.

The **Nabisco/Rose Time** site near downtown and historic neighborhoods has potential to expand the City's nearby Wharf District, a regional arts and tourism destination. This area is already attractive for local artisans, such as Huss & Dalton Guitar Company, a local wholesale maker of high-end, handcrafted acoustic guitars and banjos, and Ballerino Creamery, an artisanal cheese shop that recently opened in the adjacent former dairy building. Due to its location within the 100-year flood plain adjacent to Lewis Creek, the site would make an ideal location to hold mobile music, arts and crafts events, a food truck/vendor court and/or passive recreation facilities to connect West End with other downtown amenities. Such use could also help improve upstream storm drainage issues in the Wharf District, which experienced two 1000-year flood events in August 2020.¹⁰

1.c. Strategy for Leveraging Resources

1.c.i. Resources Needed for Site Reuse: Staunton has multiple tools/resources available to help facilitate revitalization of West End.

- West End's **OZ designation under the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act** provides multiple incentives, e.g., tax deferral or reduction and relief from some capital gains taxes, to encourage long-term private investment, which may help offset the significant capital investment anticipated to retool and reuse the former **Unifi** site.
- As a **Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Entitlement Community** since 2019, approximately \$354,000 in annual funds are available to help meet **community development and infrastructure needs**, including revitalization of neighborhoods, economic development, and improvement of community facilities, infrastructure and services.

⁸ West End Community Meeting Announcement, August 2020: <https://www.ci.staunton.va.us/Home/Components/News/News/1795/71>

⁹ CSPDC CEDS, August 2018: https://www.cspdc.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/FINAL-CEDS-2018_CSPDC.pdf

¹⁰Staunton *News Leader*, August 23, 2020: <https://www.newsleader.com/story/news/2020/08/23/what-we-know-stauntons-second-major-flood-august/3423819001/>

- The ***Staunton Creative Community Fund (SCCF)*** is available to help facilitate reuse for sites like ***Nabisco/Rose Time*** and ***Chestnut Hills***. SCCF helps small businesses by serving as a hub for entrepreneurial innovation, providing resources needed to grow a vibrant local economy, with low-interest small business loans ranging from \$1,000 to \$50,000.
- Funding specifically targeted for cleanup and reuse of brownfields sites includes the ***Virginia Brownfields Assistance Fund (VBAF)*** administered by the ***Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP)*** and ***Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (VDEQ)***. VBAF provides Planning and Assessment Grants of up to \$50,000 on a rolling basis and competitive Remediation Grants of up to \$500,000 annually to localities with viable, impactful reuse plans for existing brownfields sites. EPA brownfield grant funding may be used toward the required 100% match for these potentially game-changing state grants. ***VBAF has served as a tremendous redevelopment tool utilized by Staunton in the past for two critical projects as further detailed in Section 4.b.ii – Experience with Other Assistance Agreements.***

1.c.ii. Use of Existing Infrastructure: The City's latest Comprehensive Plan (2018) specifically focuses on brownfields redevelopment by emphasizing reuse of existing infrastructure and buildings, revitalization of blighted and vacant properties and redevelopment in older, high density areas with existing utilities and infrastructure. Full infrastructure is in-place throughout the target area with sufficient capacity for growth and area-wide redevelopment, including 3-phase electric, natural gas, broadband, and City water, sewer and stormwater services. The Comprehensive Plan designates the target area as a ***Priority 1 Growth Stimulation Area***, which encourages development by focusing on extension or upgrade of services and facilities where needed. The City will work with owners and developers to address potential City infrastructure deficiencies through its capital improvement plan. Each of the priority sites have direct access to the target corridors, which are primary roadways under City maintenance and connect downtown to the Woodrow Wilson Parkway providing access to Interstates 81 and 64, making them desirable and suitable for redevelopment.

2. COMMUNITY NEED AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

2.a. Community Need

2.a.i. The Community's Need for Funding: With a stagnant economy over the last several decades, property values in West End have remained stationary or seen decline, in some cases by as much as 50%. Census Tract 2, the most southerly of the two OZ census tracts, has very low median household income (MHI) of \$34,271, just under 48% of the state MHI; high poverty rates; and the City's highest concentration of minorities at 26%. Census Tract 3 exhibits similar issues with lower MHI (around 70% of state MHI), along with the highest overall poverty rate (17.1%), highest poverty rate among persons under 18 (21.3%) and highest poverty among persons over 65 (13.2%) compared to the remainder of the City. Based on the latest available comparative population and economic data,¹¹ ***the population of West End would face extensive obstacles and challenges in facilitating assessment and redevelopment of brownfield sites*** without assistance per the following table:

CRITERIA	US	VA	STAUNTON	TRACT 2	TRACT 3
POPULATION	322,903,030	8,413,774	24,452	3,379	5,586
PERCENT UNDER 18	22.8%	22.2%	19.1%	20.9%	22.7%
PERCENT OVER 65	15.2%	14.6%	20.7%	14.1%	19.0%
PERCENT LIVING ALONE	27.7%	27.0%	36.6%	49.2%	28.5%
PERCENT MINORITY	38.9%	37.8%	18.9%	26.0%	15.5%
PERCENT OVER 65 REPORTING DISABILITY	35.0%	32.9%	37.0%	47.8%	39.5%
GRANDPARENTS RESPONSIBLE FOR CHILDREN	34.8%	35.1%	41.3%	72.6%	39.4%
MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME (MHI)	\$60,293	\$71,564	\$48,049	\$34,271	\$50,353
PERCENT OF STATE MHI	N/A	100.0%	67.1%	47.9%	70.4%
PERCENT IN POVERTY (ALL PERSONS)	14.1%	10.9%	13.7%	14.6%	17.1%
PERCENT IN POVERTY (UNDER 18)	19.5%	14.5%	19.0%	10.7%	21.3%
PERCENT IN POVERTY (OVER 65)	13.2%	7.6%	10.6%	11.4%	13.2%

¹¹ US Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year Estimates, DP-03 & DP05, 2014-2018: <https://data.census.gov/acs/www/data/data-tables-and-tools/narrative-profiles/2018/reports>

2.a.ii. Threats to Sensitive Populations

(1) Health or Welfare of Sensitive Populations: The target area Census tracts include high percentages of the City's vulnerable population including older, poorer individuals and minorities with limited capacity to bring about economic change on their own. In Census Tract 2, almost 48% of persons over 65 report having a disability, and of grandparents living with grandchildren, 72.6% are responsible for the basic needs of their grandchildren, more than double that percentage nationwide (34.8%). These precarious households are much more likely to struggle with poverty and health issues than typical households.¹² Around 28.6% of all City residents were determined to be "food insecure," i.e., having run out of food and/or been worried about running out of food in the previous year, compared to 21.8% for the region, whereas almost 52% of low-income persons reported food insecurity, which is particularly troubling in West End due to marked disparities in MHI and higher poverty rates compared to the remainder of the City. To address this issue, the West End revitalization initiative will place specific focus on facilities and services for both youth (health and wellness activities, day care and after school care) and seniors (health, wellness, resources for aging in place and related support services) for those with limited resources.

(2) Greater Than Normal Incidence of Disease and Adverse Health Conditions: ***Although Census Tract level health data are not available for the target area,*** according to the latest (2019) Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) by Augusta Health,¹³ Staunton reflects troubling trends toward multiple health disparities compared to the surrounding Staunton-Waynesboro-Augusta (SWA) region and state. Many of these issues are known to result from exposure to environmental contaminants, particularly higher incidences of cancer and chronic lower respiratory disease (CLRD), including asthma. Also, among SWA respondents, 58.3% of Staunton residents report having three or more chronic, potentially disabling, health conditions compared to 48.5% in the SWA region. These statistics generally increase with age and are more often reported among low-income households, such as those in West End.

CRITERIA	US	VA	STAUNTON	SWA AREA	BENCHMARK
HEART DISEASE	166.3	153.1	221.9	169.0	156.9
STROKE	37.5	37.9	50.4	36.7	34.8
ALL CANCER	155.6	156.1	197.9	162.5	161.4
LUNG CANCER	109	102.8	137.0	119.6	21.8
PROSTATE CANCER	60.2	58.9	73.6	65.4	45.5
CLRD, INCLUDING ASTHMA	41	35.5	57.9	48.2	N/A
LIVER DISEASE	10.8	9.5	26.5	14.9	8.2
DIABETES	21.3	21.2	32.0	25.5	20.5
KIDNEY DISEASE	13.2	16.5	24.1	18.0	N/A
ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE	30.2	26.7	56.7	39.4	N/A

*AGE ADJUSTED DEATHS PER 100,000 POPULATION, 2017-2017

The ***West End Revitalization Initiative*** and ***Brownfields Program*** will include efforts to ***address health disparities and the inequitable distribution of resources*** among vulnerable residents by directing reuse and redevelopment opportunities toward appropriate ***access to health care, physical activities, assistive support, wellness education, work opportunities, and social outlets.***

(3) Disproportionately Impacted Populations: The West End target area is among the poorest areas of the City as noted in ***Section 2.a.i*** with poverty rates exceeding those of the remainder of Staunton, the larger Central Shenandoah region and state. Much of this disparity is partly a result of the siting of historic railroad facilities and related industry and warehousing operations in this vicinity, which is evident by significant housing disparities noted in these Census Tracts. Tract 2 has the City's highest number of renters (61.1%) versus homeowners (38.9%), and a very high percentage of those renters (46.7%) are considered cost burdened with more than 30% of their household income dedicated to housing cost. According to the 2019 CHNA report, 16.2% of survey respondents in Staunton had ongoing problems with leaks, rodents, insects, mold, or other housing conditions that made living there unhealthy or unsafe as compared to 9.9% in the SWA region within

¹² "The Age of Grandparents Is Made of Many Tragedies." *The Atlantic*, June 1, 2018: <https://www.theatlantic.com/family/archive/2018/06/this-is-the-age-of-grandparents/561527/>

¹³ Augusta Health Community Health Needs Assessment, 2019: https://www.augustahealth.com/sites/default/files/documents/community-outreach/augusta_health_chna_report_-_2019.pdf

the preceding year. In short, the West End target area has suffered for decades from a disproportionate share of negative environmental impacts and an overall lack of private investment. Funding is not available for addressing brownfields sites with potential to promote new investment and economic development. Ultimately, the assessment and remediation of sites in the target area will bring new jobs, new residents, affordable housing opportunities, healthy alternatives and increased revenue to the benefit of all currently living and working in West End.

2.b. Community Engagement

2.b.i / 2.b.ii Project Involvement & Project Roles: Through the recently undertaken *West End Revitalization Initiative* a number of partner organizations have been identified to date that will continue to take active roles as Staunton's *Brownfields Redevelopment Advisory Group (BRAG)*:

Partner Name	Point of Contact / Email / Phone	Specific Role in Project
Central Shenandoah PDC 112 MacTanly Place	Elizabeth McCarty, Deputy Director Email: elizabeth@cspdc.org Phone: 540.885.5174	BRAG member, regional planning liaison, EDA / CARES Act grant coordination
Historic Staunton Foundation 20 South New Street	Frank Strassler, Executive Director Email: director@historicstaunton.org Phone: 540.885.7676	BRAG member, historic preservation liaison, research support, education and advocacy
Salvation Army 1700 W. Beverley Street	Kim Wentz, Regional Resource Development Dir. Email: kimwentz@uss.salvationarmy.org Phone: 800.400.5992	BRAG member, community outreach, education and advocacy
Staunton Augusta Family YMCA 708 N. Coalter Street	Josh Cole, Executive Director Email: josh@saymca.org Phone: 540.885.8089	BRAG member, youth services liaison, community outreach, education
Staunton Redevelopment/Housing Authority 900 Elizabeth Miller Gardens	Wanda Stevens, Executive Director Email: wstevens@stauntonrha.org Phone: 540.886.3413	BRAG member, housing services liaison, community education and advocacy
West End Farmers Market 2030 W. Beverley Street	Jean Reynolds, Farmers Market Coordinator Email: jeana113@comcast.net Phone: 720.308.5005	BRAG member, community outreach, education and advocacy
Staunton's West End Alliance 1614 W. Beverley Street	Betty Link Jordan, Manager Email: bkjor@comcast.net Phone: N/A	BRAG member, community outreach, education and advocacy
The Valley Mission 1513 W. Beverley Street	Susan Richardson, Executive Director Email: susanrichardson@valleymission.net Phone: 540.886.4673	BRAG member, homeless community liaison, community outreach and advocacy
West End Business Association 1416 Churchville Avenue	Kim Harris and Joe Mills Email: kpharris2@verizon.net Phone: 540.885.5013 / 540.294.5180	BRAG member, business community liaison, communication support and networking

Most notable among the project partners listed above, the *Staunton's West End Alliance* is a grassroots organization of target area residents and businesses with specific goals to improve the area's general infrastructure, visibility, and overall aesthetic to improve its economic viability. The *West End Business Association* is likewise a target area organization focused on developing direct contacts and partnerships with the business community to increase opportunities for economic growth and prosperity of all. Both of these partners are strongly committed to the preservation and revitalization of West End and will take an active role in leading the City's Brownfields Program.

2.b.iii. Incorporating Community Input: Staunton has long been committed to open, transparent communication and meaningful citizen involvement and regularly conducts citizen surveys to capture opinions about City services and quality of life. Most relevant to the proposed brownfields redevelopment program, the *West End Revitalization Initiative* began engaging the target community directly in early September 2020 to prepare the *Preliminary Revitalization Plan for West End* as further detailed in *Section 1.b.i*. Direct citizen input toward prioritization of brownfield sites and development of a true community-driven revitalization roadmap will be paramount to strategically planned neighborhood improvements. It is anticipated that most representatives involved in this initial outreach, including the partners listed above, will remain involved in the project as the City's *Brownfields Redevelopment Advisory Group (BRAG)* upon award and will continue to guide and champion the program, thereby providing direct community input into the

brownfields initiative. The BRAG will meet quarterly to assist City staff with site selection and cleanup/reuse planning. City staff will update citizens of brownfields activities through social media, periodic updates at Council meetings, and direct meetings with those most directly affected by the project. The BRAG and City will involve representatives of neighborhoods most directly impacted by proposed redevelopment projects. Outreach efforts to be conducted throughout the target area will include educational seminars/workshops and design charrettes intended to garner input on existing assets and redevelopment needs. Staunton has successfully used socially distanced in-person meetings and virtual meeting platforms such as Zoom to conduct meetings during COVID-19. Meeting announcements will be distributed/posted throughout the target community and emailed to appropriate parties, and all gatherings will be publicly advertised via local print and electronic media. Partner organizations like the **Salvation Army** and **Valley Mission** will represent disadvantaged communities to communicate their needs and disseminate information, which will be beneficial for constituents with limited internet and/or phone access.

3. TASK DESCRIPTIONS, COST ESTIMATES, AND MEASURING PROGRESS

3.a. Description of Tasks/Activities and Outputs

Task 1 – Program Administration / Community Engagement	
i.	Project Implementation: Cooperative Agreement Oversight: Program and financial management to ensure compliance with grant requirements; PPFs and ACRES input/updates; brownfields training and conferences; and quarterly, annual, and final compliance reports. Community Engagement: Coordinating and conducting community meetings and preparing related materials. Grant-funded direct costs: Travel expenses, supplies, and contractual costs for assistance with reporting and maintaining interaction with stakeholders. Non-EPA funded activities: In-kind staff time for administration, monitoring, and reporting; community engagement coordination; and attending training/conferences.
ii.	Anticipated Project Schedule: Procure QEP per 4.a.iii: Months 1–3; Other activities: Months 1–36.
iii.	Task / Activity Lead: City management team with input/assistance from QEP and BRAG.
iv.	Outputs: RFP/QEP Contract (1); Quarterly Reports (12 Total - 4/Year); Annual Reports (3); Closeout Report (1); PPFs/ACRES Entries (10); BRAG Meetings (12); Community Meetings (4); Conferences (4); Brochures (1); Media Releases (3); Web Content (1); Advertisement, printing and supplies (4 events).
Task 2 – Inventory Mapping & Database, Site Prioritization, Eligibility & Access	
i.	Project Implementation: Staunton will begin with a brownfields site inventory and database for sites in the target area, including priority sites, which will be compiled, mapped, characterized, and prioritized by the BRAG and staff based on community vision and needs and a pool of sites will be selected for assessment. No assessments will be conducted prior to confirming eligibility with EPA and DEQ if applicable using Property Approval Questionnaires (PAQs). Grant-funded activities: Contractual costs to develop, maintain inventory/database and prepare PAQs. Non-EPA funded activities: In-kind staff time for oversight, site prioritization, and access coordination with property owners.
ii.	Anticipated Project Schedule: Develop initial inventory mapping/database: Months 3-6 for priority sites, additional sites added through Month 36; Prepare/submit PAQs: Month 3-36.
iii.	Task / Activity Lead: QEP to prepare/maintain inventory and PAQs with AOR oversight, assistance with site access and work product review/approval. BRAG will provide input for site selection/prioritization.
iv.	Outputs: Inventory/Database (1); Site Prioritization Matrix (1); New and/or Updated PAQs (16)
Task 3 – Environmental Site Assessments (ESAs)	
i.	Project Implementation: Upon receiving eligibility approval and access from property owners, approximately 10 Phase I ESAs will be conducted beginning with priority sites. The number of ESAs will be determined during the inventory process. Time and costs for Phase I ESAs are contingent upon property size, existing improvements, past uses, and extent of known or suspected Recognized Environmental Conditions (RECs). Based on Phase I ESA results, sites will be chosen for Phase II ESAs, which include (a) project work plans, i.e., generic Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP), site specific Health and Safety Plans (HASPs), and Sampling and Analysis Plans (SAPs); (b) soil and groundwater sampling; (c) lab analyses and data validation; and (d) summary reports with recommendations for further action, if warranted. Grant-funded activities: Contractual costs for assessments, work plans, and reports. Non-EPA funded activities: In-kind staff time for oversight, coordination with property owners, and review of work products prior to submittal to EPA.

ii. Anticipated Project Schedule: Phase I ESAs: Months 6 – 34; Phase II ESAs: Months 6 – 35
iii. Task / Activity Lead: QEP with AOR oversight, assistance with property owner coordination and review/approval of work products.
iv. Outputs: Phase I ESA Reports (10); Phase II ESA Reports (3); Phase II ESA Planning Documents (7 Total): Generic QAPP (1), HASPs (3) and SAPs (3)
Task 4 – Preliminary Planning for Remediation and/or Redevelopment
i. Project Implementation: For some sites addressed through Phase II ESAs, preliminary remediation plans (Analyses of Brownfields Clean-Up Alternatives or ABCAs) and associated cost estimates will be prepared to review alternatives for further environmental investigation and/or remediation, if warranted. Staff and QEP will also work with stakeholders to conduct preliminary redevelopment planning for selected target areas and/or specific sites to explore best reuse and economic potential of assessed sites. This may include reuse plans, marketing/feasibility studies, master plans, infrastructure evaluations, and conceptual development plans. Grant-funded activities: QEP costs for remediation and redevelopment plans. Non-EPA funded activities: In-kind staff time for oversight, coordination with property owners and community partners and review/approval of work products.
ii. Anticipated Schedule: Months 6 to 36.
iii. Task / Activity Lead: QEP with AOR oversight, assistance with property owner coordination and community input, and review/approval of work products.
iv. Outputs: Site-Specific ABCA (1); Site-Specific Redevelopment Plans / Studies for priority sites (3); Area-Wide Revitalization Plans / Study for target area (1)

3.b. Cost Estimates:

TASK ➡ CATEGORY ↓	1 Oversight / Community Engagement	2 Inventory / Prioritization / Access	3 Environmental Site Assessments*	4 Remediation / Redevelopment Planning	TOTAL
Travel	\$4,500	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$4,500
Supplies	\$500	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$500
Contractual	\$12,000	\$9,000	\$184,000	\$90,000	\$295,000
GRANT TOTAL	\$17,000	\$9,000	\$184,000	\$90,000	\$300,000

*Includes Phase I and II ESAs and Quality Assurance Documents / Work Plans (QAPP, HASPs, SAPs)

3.b.i. Development of Cost Estimates:¹⁴ Based on anticipated outputs for each task, cost estimates were developed on a per year, per quarter, per event or per site basis as follows:

Task 1 – Administration / Community Engagement – \$17,000 Total Budget:
(a) Travel – \$4,500 Total (Direct Expense) – Average travel expenses for 1 staff person to attend 2 national brownfields conferences @ \$1,500 per event (including registration, airfare, lodging and meals) and for 2 staff persons to attend 2 state or regional conferences @ \$375 per person per event (including registration, lodging and meals).
(b) Supplies – \$500 Total (Direct Expense) – Advertisement and printing for 4 community-wide and/or site-specific events estimated @ \$125 per event.
(c) Contractual – \$12,000 Total – QEP assistance estimated at \$500 per quarter (\$2,000 per year / \$6,000 total) for reporting/grant administration assistance and \$500 per quarter (\$2,000 per year / \$6,000 total) for community engagement assistance including development of communication materials.

¹⁴3.b.ii. – Application of Cost Estimates: Cost estimates provided are intended to achieve primary goals/outcomes of program. Direct costs are based on reasonable estimates for travel and supplies on a per event basis. Contractual costs are based on typical average costs for assistance provided by QEP with experience and expertise to carry out technical activities and prepare compliant reports/planning documents based on similar commercial and industrial sites in our geographic area.

3.b.iii – Funds Allocated Toward Environmental Site Assessments: Budget includes allocation of **>61% toward site assessments** and **30% toward remediation and redevelopment planning** (Threshold Criteria – Other Considerations Checklist).

Task 2 – Inventory / Prioritization / Access Coordination – \$9,000 Total – Contractual:
(a) Develop and maintain GIS brownfields site inventory mapping/database and prepare site prioritization matrix estimated @ \$3,000 total.
(b) Site access coordination assistance, preparation and submittal of new or updated PAQs @ \$500 per quarter (\$2,000 per year / \$6,000 total).
Task 3 – Environmental Site Assessments (ESAs) – \$184,000 Total – Contractual
(a) Phase I ESAs – Ten (10) @ \$5,000 average – \$50,000 Total
(b) Phase II ESAs – Three (3) @ \$40,000 average – \$120,000 Total
(c) Project Work Plans – Seven (7) plans – \$14,000 Total, as follows: • Generic Quality Assurance Project Plan – 1 @ \$5,000 • Site-Specific Health and Safety Plans (HASPs)* – 3 @ \$1,500 average – \$4,500 Total • Site-Specific Sampling and Analysis Plans (SAPs)* – 3 @ \$1,500 average – \$4,500 Total
*Note: HASPs and SAPs will be combined into single report submittal.
Task 4 – Remediation / Redevelopment Plans – \$90,000 Total – Contractual
Based on site conditions following assessment, Staunton anticipates completing approximately five (5) planning documents estimated as follows:
(a) Preliminary Site Remediation Plan (ABCA) – 1 @ \$15,000
(b) Site-Specific Redevelopment/Reuse Plans/Studies – 3 @ \$15,000 average – \$45,000 total
(c) Area-Wide Redevelopment Plans/Studies – 1 @ \$30,000

3.c. Measuring Environmental Results: To maintain progress throughout the grant period, the QEP will prepare *monthly reports to the City and BRAG* in compliance with the approved *EPA Cooperative Agreement Work Plan*, which will summarize activities, e.g., milestones achieved, issues encountered, and budget/schedule updates. These will be used to gauge progress, communicate with constituents and prepare quarterly performance reports. Updates will be reported upon implementation and completion of each site-related task in *EPA's ACRES database*, and the City will provide ongoing and post-grant information describing outcomes and benefits of the funding, including additional funds leveraged, jobs created, acres made ready for redevelopment, private investment and tax revenue generated through the program.

4. PROGRAMMATIC CAPABILITY AND PAST PERFORMANCE

4.a. Programmatic Capability

4.a.i / 4.a.ii Organizational Structure / Description of Key Staff: The City has the organizational structure and staff capability to successfully administer the grant with key staff noted below:

AUTHORIZED ORGANIZATIONAL REPRESENTATIVE (AOR): William L. "Billy" Vaughn, Director of Community & Economic Development - With over 40 years of local and regional government experience, Billy has served as Director of Community & Economic Development since 2014, overseeing community development, economic development, engineering, building services and planning divisions. He has served on the Staunton School Board, the City Planning Commission, and the Shenandoah Valley Partnership, a regional development agency.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT / PLANNING: Amanda DiMeo, Economic Development Specialist - A 2002 graduate of Mary Baldwin University in Staunton, Amanda has served with the City for over 16 years. She will assist Billy and the project team with grant administration, community outreach and education, events planning and overall program communications.

FINANCIAL: Phil M. Trayer, Chief Financial Officer (CFO), will assist with project accounting and financial reporting. With over 32 years of public administration / financial experience, Phil is the City's principal budgetary control officer who oversees local tax collections, manages all City accounts and prepares Staunton's almost \$150 million annual budget.

TECHNICAL: John Glover, Building Official / Flood Plain Administrator will assist with technical reviews of environmental reports and redevelopment plans. John has been with the City for over 25 years, 20 years as building official, and has served as erosion and sediment control administrator, fire official and zoning administrator.

4.a.iii. Acquiring Additional Resources: Staunton will rely on a ***Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP)*** with appropriate expertise and resources to carry out the technical aspects of its program. To obtain high quality services at reasonable cost, the City will follow its competitive negotiation policies and procedures, which will be conducted in a fair and impartial manner in compliance with Federal Code 40 CFR 31.36 and the Virginia Public Procurement Act (VA Code, Chapter 43, Title 2.2) for QEP selection. Beginning with advertisement of a request for qualifications and proposals, followed by interviews with top candidates if needed, staff will score applicants and make recommendations to the City Council for approval to negotiate a contract with a qualified candidate. Applicable EPA solicitation clauses will be incorporated into the City's solicitation and contract executed with the selected QEP.

4.b. Past Performance and Accomplishments

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

(1) Purpose and Accomplishments: Staunton has managed assistance agreements from multiple federal, regional, and state resources, including HUD, Federal Highways (VDOT), VEDP, and VDEQ. As most representative of the current project, a multi-phased project to develop Staunton Crossing has been underway at the old Western State Hospital (WSH) campus since the City's acquisition of the site in 2009. Several activities necessary for the orderly development of the site have been accomplished including construction of Crossing Way, a 4-lane entrance boulevard (***\$1.8M VDOT Revenue Sharing Project, awarded in 2011***), which included relocation of a State Police building that stood near the entrance of the property. As a result, Phase I of the project, known as Staunton Crossing Center, was completed in 2017 and now features two new hotels opened in 2018 with plans for additional general commercial use fronting Richmond Road with food venues, retail, a gas station and office buildings. Phase II of Staunton Crossing provides for mixed-use with retail, office, and multi-family residential. Using an ***\$8.7 million VDOT SmartScale grant awarded in 2018***, the City will extend Crossing Way through the remainder of the site to complete Phase II, which includes a Park and Ride facility, electric vehicle charging stations, sheltered bus stop and multi-use path and is expected to be complete by 2025. Phase III is underway utilizing City capital funds to leverage a ***\$431,200 VBAF Remediation Grant awarded in 2019*** for asbestos abatement and demolition of several remaining large WSH buildings to ready the remaining 105 acres for light industrial and research and development use. The project is expected to be complete by December 2021.

Staunton was also awarded a ***\$50,000 VBAF Assessment grant in 2012*** for the former Robert E. Lee High School property in West End, which was subsequently renovated and converted to a senior housing facility. Environmental studies associated with the project included Phase I and II ESAs to evaluate environmental conditions of the site and provide recommendations for management of impacted fill material near Peyton Creek prior to handling and removal. The environmental assessments were completed in August 2012. The school property was preserved through adaptive reuse as market-rate senior housing with transformation of former classrooms into 62 apartments and community spaces now serving as an epicenter of activity for the senior population.

(2) Compliance with Grant Requirements: As noted, the City has managed multiple federally funded projects and is fully capable of successfully completing all phases of work under this cooperative agreement. Under direction of the Finance Director, the City's Finance Department is responsible for administration and accounting of all grants received by the City. Primary responsibilities include administering and monitoring existing federal and state grants and grant expenditures. The City's Community and Economic Development staff will oversee grant administration and are familiar with and understand the necessity of developing work plans, creating and maintaining schedules, and assuring adherence to project terms and conditions. For the representative project identified above, all applicable site information, required administrative reports, design documentation, and final inspections were submitted in a timely manner and approved by funding and regulatory agencies with purview. Final project closeout was accomplished for these projects in compliance with all program requirements.

CITY OF STAUNTON, VIRGINIA
PROPOSAL FOR USEPA'S COMMUNITY-WIDE BROWNFIELDS ASSESSMENT GRANT
RFP NO. EPA-OLEM-OBLR-20-06 / CFDA NO. 66.818

Section III.B. – Threshold
Criteria October 28, 2020

1. Applicant Eligibility

The City of Staunton was founded in 1747 as a political subdivision of the Commonwealth of Virginia and incorporated as an independent city in 1902 and is, thus, considered a ***General Purpose Unit of Local Government***.

2. Community Involvement

Staunton has long been committed to open, transparent communication and meaningful citizen involvement and regularly conducts citizen surveys to capture opinions about City services and quality of life. Most relevant to the proposed brownfields redevelopment program, the ***West End Revitalization Initiative*** began engaging the target community directly in early September 2020 to prepare the ***Preliminary Revitalization Plan for West End*** as further detailed in the City's Narrative Proposal ***Section 1.b.i***. Direct citizen input toward prioritization of brownfield sites and development of a true community-driven revitalization initiative will be paramount to strategically planned target area improvements. As further detailed in ***Section 2.b.iii***, the City will engage a community board made up of elected officials, administrative officers, economic developers, and public/private sector representatives (Project Partners) to serve as the ***Staunton Brownfields Redevelopment Advisory Group (Staunton BRAG)***. The BRAG will advance a sustainable brownfields program for the City and serve as brownfields ambassadors, advisors and a steering committee throughout the project, bringing community vision and expertise in planning, development, construction and real estate. Engaging impacted target area neighborhoods will be critical to a practical approach to identify and advance redevelopment opportunities. The BRAG will guide support for program goals, engage stakeholders to better understand their needs, concerns, and interests and provide a voice for the broader community and a forum for those who may not be directly represented by the BRAG.

The BRAG will meet quarterly to assist City staff with site selection and cleanup/reuse planning. City staff will update citizens of brownfields activities through social media, periodic updates at Council meetings, and direct meetings with those most directly affected by the project. The BRAG and City will involve representatives of neighborhoods most directly impacted by proposed redevelopment projects. Outreach efforts to be conducted throughout the target area will include educational seminars/workshops and design charrettes intended to garner input on existing assets and redevelopment needs.

Staunton has successfully used socially distanced in-person meetings and virtual meeting platforms such as Zoom to conduct public meetings during COVID-19 in accordance with their Amended ***City Participation Plan*** dated May 28, 2020. The City will continue to solicit direct feedback from the impacted community through these means as well as online surveys and polls. City policy requires reasonable accommodations and services necessary for sensory-impaired and disabled citizens at all public meetings and strives to provide translation services for non-English speakers upon request and availability. Meeting announcements will be distributed/posted throughout the target community and emailed to appropriate parties, and all gatherings will be publicly advertised via local print and electronic media utilizing the City's existing eNotification system. Partner organizations like the ***Salvation Army*** and ***Valley Mission*** will provide representation for disadvantaged communities to communicate their needs and disseminate information as needed, which will be beneficial for constituents with limited internet and/or phone access.

3. Expenditure of Assessment Grant Funds

Not Applicable: The applicant affirms it does not have an active EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant.

West End Community Meeting #1

EPA Brownfields Grant

September 3, 2020 6:00 pm

Billy Vaughn introduced Lori Kroll from Draper Aden Associates. Lori gave background information on Draper Aden, an engineering firm who handles civil engineering, environmental engineering and surveying, among other things.

Ms. Kroll said that Staunton City Council is excited for Draper Aden to be providing their services to improve the West End (WE). The WE is a target area for an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Brownfields grant, which would be the beginning to revitalizing this area. Applying for the Brownfields grant needs to be a community driven plan, so we are here to discuss strengths, weaknesses, assets, and to create a shared vision, strategy, tools and resources.

Ms. Kroll stated we were hoping to have met several times by now, but due to the pandemic, we were not able to. We will have additional meetings from here out. Draper Aden will apply for the Brownfields grant on behalf of the city. The grant is for \$300,000 over a 3 year cycle, with no match required.

Ms. Kroll explained that a Brownfields Grant is a national program funded by the EPA, to explore and address possibilities for expansion, redevelopment, perceptions about an area, grant administration, environmental site assessment, outreach, site inventory and redevelopment and revitalization. This can be for a wider area, or site specific. She gave examples of ways Brownfields grants have been used in Richmond, Roanoke, Lynchburg and Pulaski. She talked about Environmental Assessments that could address issues with asbestos, lead paint, structural evaluations, etc. She further discussed Phase 1 and Phase 2 Environmental studies, and what they would include. Ms. Kroll said the conceptual planning could be used to apply for other grants and funding, as well as marketing, feasibility and economic impact studies.

Ms. Kroll showed the two census tracts that are considered the WE, and said the grant is due on October 28th. She asked the following questions, followed by responses from the participants:

What makes the WE special?

History

Walkable and flat terrain

Good access to 262 (Ms. Kroll said actually traffic counts dropped by 50% when 262 was built)

Affordable

Affordable historic homes – all the makings of a traditional community

1929-1949 gas stations

Rebecca Joyce commented: Growing up in the WE and coming back and living there now, I remember nice yards, gardens, walkable areas, but even when I was younger it seemed restaurants struggled staying open.

What is the WE's greatest asset?

Joe Mills said the West End Business Alliance (WEBA) was created two years ago, and they have learned there are 85 businesses, 6 gas stations, 6 full service restaurants, two public schools, a Fire Department, Gypsy Hill Park, Montgomery Hall Park, Fisher Auto Parts, and 15 corporate stores. He added the WE has "good bones" and is in a renewal stage.

What is the WE's greatest need?

Branding – recognizing the value that is already there.

As soon as you get off 262, there is a brown sign encouraging you to come downtown
Gypsy Hill Golf Course – not branded correctly

Ms. Kroll gave suggestions of possible re-uses for existing buildings:

An old covered gas station as a restaurant/winery with outdoor covered seating
Chestnut Hills as an aftercare facility, indoor farmers' market, gym, makerspace or combination
Abandoned Rite Aid – aftercare
Old Unifi factory – remain as that type of use

What types of redevelopment will stop the WE from being a "pass through" neighborhood?

Ms. Kroll gave the example of Fondren in Jackson Mississippi. Hip, cool places to hang out, restaurants, etc. after branding. Fondren took 20 years to develop.

A participant said recreational space for children had not been mentioned. Ms. Kroll said children breed young families relocating. She said there needed to be things for all ages of children as well as seniors.

Next Steps:

September 10th, Ms. Kroll will present this information to City Council. Another community meeting will be held on October 1, 6:00 pm Gypsy Hill Gym to discuss ideas that will strengthen the grant application. These meetings were not a requirement; the city wanted us to get community input. On September, will go back to City Council for authority to submit the grant. Will have community meeting in January to begin working on a plan, and by spring, we should have a draft plan. We will work in small groups and breakout sessions. We will learn in May if we received the grant, and will receive the money in October if awarded to us.

Draper Aden is providing their services free of charge as part of their community effort to Staunton.

Meeting minutes submitted by Kim Cormier.

West End Community Meeting #2
EPA Brownfields Grant
October 1, 2020, 6:00 – 7:00 pm

Billy Vaughn introduced Lori Kroll from Draper Aden Associates. Draper Aden is an engineering firm who handles civil engineering, environmental engineering and surveying, among other things.

Ms. Kroll noted that in 20 years, this is the largest community meeting she has hosted. She has driven around the West End (WE) as well as both parks. Getting this Brownfields grant is a priority of Staunton City Council.

Draper Aden will apply for the Brownfields grant on behalf of the city, and the due date is October 28. The grant is for \$300,000 over a 3-year cycle, with no match required. The funds can be used for things like further community planning, environmental site assessments, and preliminary redevelopment plans at specific sites, among other things. Draper Aden will give an outline of the proposal to City Council next week.

Priority sites:

Unifi – long term use polyester facility from the 1960's. Potential environmental issues. Could possibly pre-screen for sale or lease if needed.

Chestnut Hills – probably no serious environmental issues, maybe asbestos, lead based paint and/or mold. Spoke with owner who noted leaking and mold issues, but doesn't want to spend the money to fix without firm redevelopment plans and reuse commitment in place. Site may not be conducive to retail, and he has interest in reconfiguring. Possible uses could be storage/warehousing, daycare, after school care, makerspace, etc.

Nabisco/Rose Time Scrap – Located in flood zone. Possible uses Farmers' Market, food truck court. Additional redevelopment discussions are ongoing along with adjacent CSX site. Some contamination issues to be addressed, but discussions with DEQ have been underway for some time.

Greenville Ave. – Multiple small commercial sites, located right at the edge of WE.

This is a starting list only. If we have other sites in mind, we will add them to the list. Will use as inventory and develop a matrix for prioritization.

Challenges:

More frequent storms and weather events that can produce contamination from flooding. This area could be adding to problems in downtown Staunton. The city is in the process of looking at this.

Opportunities:

Ms. Kroll gave the example of Pulaski. Once invested, other funding can come along.

Shenandoah Green - 2,726 trees to be planted in Staunton. One for every student in public school. Helps flooding, good for environment. This initiative could be enhanced through the brownfields programs and would be a good fit for partnership initiative.

Preliminary Revitalization Plan:

Community led plan – City Council wants your thoughts and ideas. Will develop a schedule.

Survey:

Need youth involved (maybe through Y), also need senior voice, young family voice, schools, housing groups. Need to determine physical improvements, recommendations from City Council for each corridor, potential catalyst sites, economic restructuring.

Not the time for market studies – climate will be different in 6 months. Will identify strengths and weaknesses and submit next year.

Next Steps:

Will have one to two more meetings to talk about priorities and think of other groups to include in long-term revitalization discussions.

Plan is to develop a preliminary revitalization strategy and present to City Council in the Spring.

Ms. Kroll said there will be concentration on certain areas first. There has to be an economic engine to drive this part. New hotels drive more people into Staunton and downtown to spend money, which offsets residents' taxes.

Think, and talk to your neighbors.

Questions/Comments:

Lisa Coles – if we raise property values in this area, could potentially displace residents who could no longer afford property taxes. Ms. Kroll responded there is a need for affordable housing and to attract young families and first-time homebuyers, which could be a catalyst for further commercial redevelopment.

Ms. Coles also inquired about solar. Ms. Kroll said if it is determined that solar was important and a good use for this area, it could be explored. There will likely be significant push toward solar development in the future.

Ms. Coles said infrastructure is needed. She spoke about a sewer back up that is posted on YouTube. She is concerned that with more people and more businesses comes more infrastructure issues with sanitary sewer overflows.

Fred Blanton – DEQ concerns? Ms. Kroll said we will start by evaluating and assessing. These funds in particular can't be used for site remediation.

Lance Barton – People in neighborhoods making a difference, can't always sit and wait for the City. Mayor Oakes said there will be a City Council retreat where their vision will be planned, and we will know what to focus on.

Ms. Kroll thanked everyone for their attendance and input into tonight's meeting.

West End Community Meeting #3
Community Survey Results
April 27, 2021, 6:00-7:15 p.m.

Lori Kroll, Associate Senior Community Resource Specialist with Draper Aden Associates, introduced Felicia Fred, Senior Environmental Consultant Brownfields Program Manager, who will be taking over from Ms. Kroll. Draper Aden is an engineering firm who handles civil engineering, environmental engineering and surveying, among other things.

Ms. Fred stated that she and Ms. Kroll took a tour around the West End so that Ms. Fred could familiarize herself with the area.

Brownfields Grant Update

Staunton should know soon whether or not they received the Brownfields Grant to revitalize the West End. The priority sites are Unifi Manufacturing on Morris Mill Rd, Chestnut Hill Shopping Center on West Beverley and Nabisco Warehouse/Rose Time Scrap on Bridge Street.

Community Survey

Ms. Kroll and Ms. Fred reminded the community members that this survey was not a scientific survey, it was a first step at gathering information.

- There were 170+ complete responses.
 - More than 340 started the survey process but didn't complete it.
- 78% residents, 10% businesses, 12% other
- Almost 90% of resident responses were homeowners, fairly evenly distributed as to length of tenure
- Most responders were aged 25-44, next highest group was over 62
- Incomes for the majority of responders was \$40K-\$75K and \$75K-\$125K.

The West End was geographically defined by the responders as West Beverley from Thornrose Cemetery to the by-pass; area from Churchville to Middlebrook; area between Gypsy Hill Park and Montgomery Hall Park; and some responders included Lewis Street/Newtown, Springhill Road and Grubert Avenue.

The word cloud created from the fill in question asking responders what word would they use to describe West End's current state was fill with negative words. Georgi Tomisato asked if there were any positive words. Ms. Kroll said they'd be able to answer that later in the presentation.

An audience member asked if the area defined on the map shared by Draper Aden was the official defined area of the West End. Ms. Kroll stated that the map shared was the determination of the area by the survey responders. And she stated that with the Brownfields Grant, the area can be expanded once it has been awarded to the City.

Common themes in the survey were Housing, Community Facilities, Commercial and Infrastructure Improvements. Related to the housing theme 56% responded that they wanted single family housing rehabilitation or new construction. Scott Tierman stated that this figure was misleading because in the

survey rehabilitation and new housing were two different questions. Ms. Kroll responded that they were trying to demonstrate that single family housing was the most important to survey responders. She reiterated that this was not a scientific survey. A citizen asked how many of the responders were West End residents and what the population was of the West End. Ms. Kroll responded that 78% of the responders self-identified as Staunton residents, but the question did not ask specifically about being a West End resident.

Community

- 48% would like a small neighborhood park
- 31% active community center
- 27% youth & senior services

Commercial

- 71% New small businesses
- 20% expanding existing businesses
- 10% large scale industrial

Top themes for the infrastructure improvements were streetscape and lighting; stormwater storage and conveyance; communication and broadband.

Ms. Kroll reminded the audience that this survey was a preliminary step and that the data in the presentation was just highlights. All of the data from the survey will be made available.

Business Responses

- About 25 businesses responded
- 30% had been in business for more than 25 years
- 26% in business for less than a year
- 39% with less than five employees
- 64% identified Staunton/Augusta County as their primary market
- 95% of customers are local, 5% tourist

What Attracts Most of Your Customers (could select three)

- Own a home in the area (65%)
- Walkability of Community (35%)
- Proximity to Downtown (29%)
- Attractiveness of Community (29%)
- Employed in the area (29%)

Most business responders identified advertising/marketing as most critical factors for success and growth. Second and third most important were public access and financing. Tied for fourth was labor and food traffic.

The common theme across the survey was the need for streetscaping and beautification in the area, followed closely behind with the addition of small local events and attractions.

One of the next steps in the implementation of the Brownfields Grant would be to really determine what makes the West End different and special.

One of the open-ended question responses incited a conversation. Draper Aden included it in the presentation to ask the audience why they thought it was included. The statement was: “Partner with Mental Health America of Augusta for workplace mental health problems.”

Thoughts:

- The mission is located in the West End and there has been crime recently
- Maybe just so the West End is not overlooked
- Maybe this is a way to encourage getting a satellite office or urgent care from Augusta Health in the West End
 - Vice Mayor Robertson, who was in attendance, stated that he was working with the CEO of Augusta Health to get an urgent care in the West End

Another responder stated in the survey “Not Family Dollar or businesses that go to low-income areas. Tax incentives for high quality businesses that provide jobs.”

- This statement sparked a conversation on dollar stores. One citizen stated that two dollar stores opened in the area after the survey was completed.
- Ms. Kroll pointed out that these stores come to areas that fit their profile, so that means the West End fits that profile

The Future

The word cloud for the future included a lot of words based around beautification. Georgi Tomisato and Fred Blanton both spoke up about how Shenandoah Green has gotten the green started and has been planting trees all over Staunton and specifically in the West End.

Where do we go from here?

- A task force will be created that will include citizens
- The Brownfields Grant provides funds to hire a planner/specialty consultant
- Draper Aden will work on the preliminary plan, they are not planners
- The consultant will coordinate with City departments and the task force