

December 19, 2016

R02-17-A-032

Lya Theodoratos
290 Broadway; 18th Floor
New York, NY 10007
Email: Theodoratos.Lya@epa.gov

Dear Ms. Theodoratos:

Please find the enclosed grant application of the Municipality of Cataño, Puerto Rico for the Environmental Protection Agency's Brownfield Assessment Program. This grant application requests \$200,000 in funding for a county-wide assessment that will inventory, categorize, and conduct planning and community development related to Brownfield sites in Cataño that probably have been contaminated by hazardous substances.

The Municipality of Cataño (the Municipality) is located at the northern coastal area of Puerto Rico. It encompasses approximately seven (7) square miles (mi²) of which 2.2mi² (31%) of them are water bodies. As a completely urban municipality, the land use is distributed between heavy industrial, commercial and residential (65% of the territory is Urban and 35% has been designated as natural preservation areas). The urban zone includes: heavy industrial, commercial, preservation and residential purposes. Approximately 20% of the urban zone is dedicated to industrial uses (i.e., warehouses, automobile industry, manufactories), a 4% is dedicated to commercial (retails, services, professional offices), and a 16% is dedicated to residential.

Since its official foundation in 1927 (the settlement began on 1569) the commercial and industrial development was followed by informal residential settlements that constituted many of our poorest communities. Many of the communities reclaim marsh and wetland areas by using waste landfill from the 1930 to 1970.

Obtainment of these grant funds would allow the Municipality of Cataño to help in the improvement of the quality of life of its residents and move forward with its redevelopment as stated in its Land Use Plan in an ecologically sound way.

Sincerely,



José A. Rosario Meléndez
Mayor

icm

Cover Letter – Supplemental Information

a. Applicant Identification

Municipality of Cataño
PO BOX 428
Cataño, PR 00936-0428

b. Funding Requested

- i. Grant type: Assessment
- ii. Assessment Grant Type: Community-wide
- iii. Federal Funds Requested: \$200,000.00
- iv. Contamination: Hazardous Substances

c. Location

Municipality of Cataño, Puerto Rico

d. Property information for site-specific

Not applicable. Proposal is county-wide

e. Contacts

Project Director

Ivette Colón Meléndez

Planner

Planning Office

Municipality of Cataño

PO BOX 428

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Chief Executive/Highest Ranking Elected Official

José A. Rosario Meléndez

Mayor

Municipality of Cataño

PO BOX 428

Cataño, PR 00936-0428

Tel: 787-788-0404

Fax: 787-993-6993

Email: misantiago@catano.pr.gov

f. Population

- i. 26,680 (2015 American Community Survey)
- ii. Not applicable. Applicant is a Municipality
- iii. The Municipality of Cataño, Puerto Rico is experiencing “persistent poverty” as measured by the 1990 and 2000 decennial censuses and the Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates

g. Regional Proprieties Form/Other Factors Checklist

See Appendix 3

h. Letter from the State or Tribal Environmental Authority

See Attachment A

1. Community Need

1.a. Targeted Community and Brownfields

1.a.i. Targeted Community Description

The Municipality of Cataño (the Municipality) is located at the northern coastal area of Puerto Rico. It encompasses approximately seven (7) square miles (mi²) of which 2.2mi² (31%) of them are water bodies¹. As a completely urban municipality, the land use is distributed between heavy industrial, commercial and residential (65% of the territory is Urban and 35% has been designated as natural preservation areas). The urban zone includes: heavy industrial, commercial, preservation and residential purposes. Approximately 20% of the urban zone is dedicated to industrial uses (i.e., warehouses, automobile industry, manufactories), a 4% is dedicated to commercial (retails, services, professional offices), and a 16% is dedicated to residential². For 40 years (1930 to 1970) commercial and industrial developments were followed by informal and unplanned residential developments, particularly by low income families. Residents reclaimed marsh and wetland areas using landfill waste as a filling material to build their residences, resulting on significant damages to the existing sensitive ecosystem. At present these residential areas are sharing boundaries with a sensitive wetland area known as “*Ciénaga Las Cucharillas*”, which has become the most important natural reserve in the heart of the urban metropolitan area of Puerto Rico.

The target area to be addressed in this proposal is entire urban zone of the Municipality, particularly the residential areas near by the “*Ciénaga Las Cucharillas*”. This area represents the 20% of the land available for revitalization and redevelopment in the Municipality preserving a 60% of the land as open spaces (greenspace). The Land Use Plan for the Municipality is focused on the redevelopment and revitalization of the existing impacted commercial and residential areas in order to bring new businesses and build/remodeled existing deteriorated/abandoned properties.

1.a.ii. Demographic Information and Indicators of Need

As per the 2010 Census, the Municipality had total population of 28,140, this represent a population reduction of 6.42% when compare with 2000 Census population of 30,071. In addition, as per the 2015 American Community Survey (ACS) the Municipality has a population of 26,680, which represents an additional decrease of a 5.47%. The 2015 ACS data indicates that the Municipality has a population density of 5,558 persons per mi². The median age is 36.9 years and 15.2% of that population over 65 years with a 57.6% being females. The Municipality has 10,890 housing units of which 13.9% (1,518) are vacant and 87.9% of the structures were build previous 1989, making them more than 30 old. The decrease of population is an indicator of the need to revitalize and redevelop the impacted areas to bring new businesses and housing development, resulting on a positive economic development for the Municipality. Also, the current tendency of migration of younger people to the Mainland, leaving the Municipality with an elder population with fix or limited income, is an indicator of the need to promote job creation

¹ 2010 Census, Puerto Rico and its Municipalities Population Profile and Households Characteristics, Puerto Rico Planning Board. Main water bodies are Río Hondo, Río Bayamón (rivers), Ciénaga Las Cucharillas Lagoon & San Juan Bay water front.

² 2010 Municipality of Cataño Land Use Plan

and incentives to retain the work force in the municipality and increase its overall population. The table below illustrates a specific socioeconomic indicators comparison between the Municipality, Puerto Rico and the United States (Mainland). Pertinent information is in the demographic table below:

Socioeconomic Indicators*	Municipality of Cataño	Puerto Rico	United States
Population	26,680	3,583,073	316,515,021
Unemployment Rate	16.5%	18.1%	8.3%
Poverty Rate	48.9%	45.5%	15.5%
Percent Minority ^(a)	99.3%	99.1%	29.5%
Total Households Received Food Stamps	40.2%	38.1	13.2%

*Data is from the ACS Demographic & Housing Estimates 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates at <http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=CF>
(a) Based on Hispanic or Latino population only for comparison purposes.

The average unemployment rate in the municipality is almost the same as the unemployment rate of Puerto Rico and more than three times the national rate. The municipality poverty rate is higher than the Puerto Rico and over three times the national rate. In addition, the rate of household enrolled in the food stamps program is three times the national rate and higher than Puerto Rico. These indicators also evidenced the need of the municipality to its promote the economic development and the main reason for applying for this grant. Unemployment and poverty is a main issue for the Municipality. There are not enough high wage jobs to attract a younger, high skilled workforce, and not enough younger, high skilled workforce to attract the high wage jobs. This grant will allow the Municipality to promote the development of the identified brownfields properties by making them more attractive to potential developers. Conducting environmental assessments to these properties will facilitate the real estate negotiations (selling price, monthly rent) and reduce development costs to potential developers. This will result in the job creation and tax revenue for the Municipality. We expect to create, approximately 10 direct jobs and 25 indirect jobs.

1.a.iii. Brownfields and Their Impacts

The Municipality has developed a preliminary inventory of abandoned and idle properties that may be contaminated with hazardous substances located in the urban zone that can be potential candidates for environmental assessment under this Brownfields grant. This preliminary inventory contains approximately 210 idle lots and 136 abandoned dilapidated buildings. Most of these properties were used in the past as commercial stores, industrial warehouses, manufactures, and storage areas but limited to none information available about their environmental conditions. All these properties are located in the urban zone of the Municipality within less than a mile radius from the residential area. Also, these abandoned buildings present an unacceptable risk to the environment, health and welfare of the residents since they have become a potential source of contamination and main area for illegal activities (i.e., drugs, prostitution). Moreover, due to the past use of these properties and the unknown environmental condition of them, the community members, visitors and workers may be exposed to hazardous substances, such as: lead, asbestos, solvents, organic and inorganic compounds.

1.b. Welfare, Environmental, and Public Health Impacts

1.b.i. Welfare Impacts

As per crime statistics of the Puerto Rico Police Department, there have been reported a total of 1,086 criminal incidents in the Municipality during the last four years (2013 to 2016). The average rate for robbery, rape, murder and auto theft for the Municipality are above the average rate for those crimes in Puerto Rico.

Crime Incident ³	Municipality of Cataño	Puerto Rico
Robbery	14.62%	8.85%
Rape	0.00%	0.35%
Murder	2.34%	1.25%
Auto Theft	7.31%	8.87%
Crime against property	80.4%	83.17%

There are over 136 abandoned buildings in the urban zone of the Municipality which are being used by squatters, homeless and drug addicts representing a very serious safety concern to community members. As per the 2000 and 2010 Census data, the municipality had an increase in the total of housing units in the municipality of a 7.5 %, however; the data also indicate an increase of 33.5% of vacant housing units. This is an indicator of the reduction of population in the Municipality that results on an additional financial burden to the municipality related to the provision of basic services to prevent those vacant housing units become an eyesore for the community. According to the 2015 ACS data, approximately 40% of the population in the Municipality is participating in the Food Stamps program. This represent an increase of 11% since 2007 as per the data provided in the 2007 Puerto Rico Department of Family-Social Services Report.⁴ The presence of too many abandoned and idle properties, which can be translated into lack of jobs and limited opportunities for the residences to obtain decent salaries and be financially independent.

1.b.ii. Cumulative Environmental Issues

As per Envirofact and Cleanups in my Community, there are 53 industries (i.e., refinery, manufactures, fuel terminals, metal shops, industrial warehouses, hazardous waste transporters, landfills) located in the Municipality has over 87 industries within 5-mi radius (i.e., Puerto Rico Energy Power Authority- power plants, Bacardi rum distillery, hazardous waste storage facilities). Due to the high density of heavy industries in the area, the Municipality have been considered by EPA as an Environmental Justice community due to disproportional environmental impacts against and economic conditions (49.6% poverty level) of the communities located nearby the industrial parks and heavy industries. In addition to the existing disproportional environmental burden, the fact that over 200 idle lots and 136 abandoned buildings have been used for different purposes has created a strong perception of contamination that have been a major hurdle for the municipality to redevelop them. Many of the abandoned buildings were used as chemical industrial warehouses for many years and have been abandoned for at least 10 years. Due the type of industries, these buildings may be contaminated with solvents, organic compounds, heavy metals, and other inorganics. In addition, due to the age of these buildings it is most likely to be contaminated with asbestos and lead-based paint. Also, in spite of the municipal efforts to

³ Source: Type I Crimes, http://www.estadisticas.gobierno.pr/lepr/Estadisticas/InventariodeEstadisticas/tabid/186/ctl/view_detail/mid/775/report_id/00975852-e14a-4339-a6c8-ab23fd36d2a1/Default.aspx

⁴ Source: <http://www.gobierno.pr/NR/rdonlyres/A79DFB21-4861-470D-B27B-94F057CEA59B/0/CompendioEstadisticas2008.pdf>

prevent illegal dumping, residents have been using the idle lots as illegal dumps which create a health and environmental issue, since it is unknown what kind of waste have been disposed of on those lots. Investigating these properties will allow the municipality to obtain the necessary information to take immediate action to reduce the threats to human health and the environment

1.b.iii. Cumulative Public Health Impacts

As per the Puerto Rico Central Cancer Registry, the cancer rate in the Municipality for liver, urinary bladder, cervical, and leukemia exceed the national rate⁵. In addition, the overall cancer rate for all types of cancer exceeds the overall rate for Puerto Rico⁶, as well as the cancer rate associated to stomach, liver, lung/bronchus, urinary bladder, prostate, uterus, and leukemia. As per the preliminary inventory of Brownfields properties and the limited knowledge about the uses of them, the Municipality would like to clarify and define any relationship between any contamination (i.e., organic compounds, solvents, inorganics) associated with these properties and the high cancer rate in the Municipality.

The mortality rate associated with overall cancer in the Municipality⁷ exceeds both the Puerto Rico⁸ and National mortality rate. In addition, the mortality rates in the Municipality associated with colon/rectum, liver, lung/bronchus, prostate, breast, uterus, and leukemia exceed the rates for Puerto Rico. The mortality rate in the Municipality associated with stomach, colon/rectum, liver, prostate, breast, uterus, and leukemia, also exceed the National mortality rate associated with these types of cancer.

Two of the major power plants in Puerto Rico are located less than a 5-mile radius from the Municipality, resulting on high incidents on asthma among the children and elders. In addition, the heavy traffic along the main highways, the estimated average daily traffic is 138,193 vehicles, produces a huge amount of exhaust gases that affect the urban zone. Data from the local health clinics show that more than 2,000 persons were treated for respiratory problems in 2015.

In the past years, Puerto Rico have been suffering of several tropical epidemics such as the dengue, Chikungunya, and Zika. These viruses cause significant health issues (i.e., hydrocephaly, join deformation/pain, and death). The vector responsible for propagating these viruses is the mosquito *aedes aegypti*. There have also been increased reports of Guillain-Barré syndrome, an uncommon sickness of the nervous system, in areas affected by Zika in Puerto Rico. There is not Zika data available by municipalities, so that it is unknown how many of the residents of the Municipality have been infected by the Zika virus. The Puerto Rico Health Department has confirmed 30,000 locally transmitted cases of Zika so far, from which over 1,035 are pregnant women. The massive outbreak had been feared for quite some time now and due to geographical and financial factors have contributed to the virus being able to spread so rapidly. Mosquito bites and the Zika virus are so prevalent on Puerto Rico that the CDC has projected that more than 20 percent of Puerto Rico's population of over 3.6 million people would be infected with the virus by the end of 2016. In the Municipality, *Aedes Aegypti* mosquito-breeding sites are mainly the abandoned structures with stagnant waters.

⁵ <http://www.rcpr.org/Portals/0/Informe%202008-2012.pdf>

⁶ http://www.estadisticas.pr/iepr/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=EnLKATM_hxc%3d&tabid=186

⁷ <http://www.rcpr.org/Portals/0/Informe%202008-2012.pdf>

⁸ http://www.estadisticas.pr/iepr/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=EnLKATM_hxc%3d&tabid=186

1.C. Financial Need

1.C.i. Economic Conditions

As mentioned above, the average unemployment rate (16.5) in the municipality is very close to the average unemployment rate of Puerto Rico (18.1) and is almost three times the national rate (8.3). This explain that more than 40% of the population in the Municipality participates in the Food Stamps program. The increase of vacant housing units and the hundreds of abandoned building represent a financial burden to the Municipality, as evidenced by the low Property taxes and business taxes revenues received by the Municipality in the past years. Due to the great economic crisis in Puerto Rico, the central government has passed to the Municipality the management and financial responsibility of community services, creating a new financial burden to the Municipality. Due to this fact, it would be very difficult for the Municipality to reserve funds for conducting environmental assessments to the hundreds of abandoned properties in order to make them attractive to potential developers. The Municipality has identified potential sources of funding, such as U.S. Department of Housing and Development, that can help to implement its development plan. Obtaining this grant, will allow the Municipality to move forward with the redevelopment and revitalization efforts stated in the plan without sacrificing the services provided to the community.

1.C.ii. Economic Effects of Brownfields

Abandoned and dilapidated properties represent a loss of tax revenue for the Municipality. In addition, these properties represent an additional financial burden to the Municipality by spending funds in maintaining them to avoid them to become a blight area. The Municipal Planning Office (PO) has received more than 86 complaints for public nuisance properties this year. The community is asking the Municipality to declare those properties a public nuisance. The process of declaring a public nuisance creates an additional financial burden on the Municipality since the cost associated with this process include: appraisal costs, purchase price, legal fees, environmental assessments, cleanup costs, etc. The Planning Office has estimated, approximately \$5,000 per property, just to start the process. For 136 abandoned properties this represents over \$680,000 a year. The Planning Office also has estimated an average of \$1,000 property taxes lost per property per year representing a total of over \$136,000⁹ per year.

2. Project Description and Feasibility of Success

2.a. Project Description, Timing and Implementation

2.a.i. Project Description and Alignment with Redevelopment Plans

In 2010, the Puerto Rico Planning Board and the Governor's Office adopted the Land Use Plan (Plan) of the Municipality of Cataño. The purpose of the Plan is to describe the redevelopment and revitalization of the Municipality protecting natural resources, reusing impacted areas and promoting socioeconomic efforts. This Plan designs a strategy to align land use with sustainable and balanced development. It ensures that municipal, state and private projects that are scheduled for the Municipality, consider alternatives to minimize conflicting land uses. Also, it allows to review, amend and adopt regulations to resolve conflicts with practice and land uses currently prevailing in the Municipality. It orders the Municipal Legislature to pass resolutions to

⁹ Estimated from the Municipality of Cataño, Finance Department & Planning Office, Property Inventory, 2015.

state agencies involved in the process of approving and issuing building permits, to ensure they have received and considered the opinion of the Municipality prior to grant any authorization of development. Provides, administers or requires the payment of a contribution to new development projects to cover expenses for the provision of communal uses of public domain including infrastructure outside or within the project. In addition, this Plan promotes and encourages effective citizen participation in decision-making related to land use through the Community Boards, particularly when evaluating public and private projects of major local or regional impact. Recognizing the prevailing conditions related to environmental pollution and sponsor programs, projects and activities that seek to mitigate or improve the situation studied. It ensures the conservation of natural resources for their physical condition or because habitat of some endangered species required to be protected. In addition, develops plans for planting and maintenance of public green areas.

Under this grant, the Municipality plans to conduct a community-wide physical inventory of abandoned or dilapidated properties with suspicion of hazardous substances contamination. This inventory will be created as a database to include an identification number for the property, location, size, current condition, current use, current owner, and physical coordinates. This database will be used with any GIS software to perform any spatial analysis needed. The Municipality will conduct environmental assessments to selected properties. All environmental assessments will be performed in accordance with the EPA All Appropriate Inquires Rule and ASTM 1527-13 protocol. The properties will be selected based on community member's input, Municipality's priorities, economic development opportunities, property access, and property location. Depending on the results of the environmental assessments, the Municipality will develop property-specific cleanup plans and land use plans in accordance with its approved Land Use Plan. Also, as part of this project, the Municipality will design a Community Engagement Strategy to provide the opportunity to the residents to be part of the decision making process and obtain valuable input.

This grant will provide the opportunity to the municipality for conducting environmental assessment at selected sites that will enhance the sustainability of the whole community. The Municipality is committed to promote pollution prevention and reduction of resource consumption at the targeted community by assessing potential contaminated sites and redeveloping them into a productive asset (i.e., housing, recreational/open space). The limitation of land in the targeted community forces the municipality to be creative in the ways for restoration and revitalization of the selected sites. The main objective of this project is to procure a betterment in the public and social health, additional land space through the characterization (and cleanup, if needed) of potential brownfields properties in the Municipality. The goal is to reuse these properties for housing redevelopment, commercial or community uses, open and natural spaces by promoting revitalization and restoration of impacted sectors and their ecological systems. As per the approved Plan, the Municipality will develop its 2.2mi² waterfront into recreational area to bring visitors and businesses. Moreover, the Plan also encourages and promote equitable and affordable housing utilizing the green building and sustainable principles by incorporating these principles on the request for proposals (RFP) and business agreements, as practicable as possible. Following the compliance with the Storm Water Regulations, all new development will be encouraged to incorporate alternative and innovative storm water management practices to reduce site storm water runoff. In addition, any construction debris

that may be generated during the development of the new housing or removal will be use as filling material if possible and not contaminated. As part of the revitalization and restoration planning, the Municipality is also committed to reuse, as much as possible, the existing infrastructure to prevent the generation of construction debris.

2.a.ii. Project Timing and Implementation

The project will be executed during a three-year period. The proposed project timeline is as follows:

Project Milestone	Responsible	Proposed Timeline
Project Manager and Community Coordinator Procurement	Municipality (Mayor, Planning Office)	45 days after grant award
Request for Proposal/Qualification (RFP/RFQ) – Inventory and Environmental Assessment	Municipality Project Coordinator and Selected Project Manager	60 days after grant award
Environmental RFP/RFQ evaluation and Recommendation	Project Manager	60 days after RFP/RFQ
Selection of Environmental Contractor (Contract award)	Municipality (Mayor, Competition Board)	60 days after completion of RFP/RFQ evaluation
Property Inventory	Environmental Contractor	60 days after award contractor
Properties Selection	Municipality (Mayor, Planning Office) and Community	60 days after inventory completion
Property Access Agreement	Municipality Project Coordinator	Immediately the property is selected
Environmental Assessment Phase I	Environmental Contractor	90 days after property access is granted
Environmental Assessment Phase II (Quality Assurance Project Plan, Sampling Plan, Final Report)	Environmental Contractor	120 to 180 days after Environmental Assessment Phase I is approved by the Municipality
Community Engagement	Municipality Project Coordinator and Community Coordinator	Within 30 days of grant award
Property-specific Clean-up/Land Use Plan	Environmental Contractor	60 days of the completion of the Environmental Assessments
Reporting Requirements	Municipality Project Coordinator	As required by the terms and conditions of the grant – Quarterly basis
ACRES Work Packages	Municipal Project Coordinator	15 days after approval of the environmental assessment completion
Payment Request	Municipal Project Coordinator (Finance Department)	30 days after invoice is received

(a) This timeline is subjected to changes to ensure compliance with the three-year period of the grant. The table above illustrates the main milestone, including procurement process and the internal steps necessary to award a contract.

(b) As previously mentioned, the Municipality has developed a property selection process. The properties will be selected and prioritized based on the following criteria: (1) Property Eligibility Criteria per Brownfields; (2) Community’s input; (3) Community’s priorities; (4) Municipality’s priorities; (5) property’s redevelopment and job creation potential; (6) access to the property; (7) property’s location; (8) provide opportunities to improve public health through cleanup; and (9) improvement of the quality of life. Properties will not be ranked unless property access can be arranged and projects with motivated prospective purchaser/tenant will be highly considered for leveraging purposes.

(C) In order to start the project on time, the Municipality will recommend to the community, to start assessing properties owned by other governmental agencies. For private properties, the Municipality plans to hold several meetings with property owners to explain the importance of conducting environmental assessments in their properties to facilitate any real estate transaction or redevelopment. In the case that the property owner does not participate in the meeting, the Municipality will visit the private owner for a one-on-one conversation. If no owner is found and the property represent a good redevelopment opportunity for the community, the Municipality will exercise its legal authority or will seek for legal support from the Commonwealth government to get access to the property. Once the Municipality obtained the access of the property, it will ensure that the property is secured by appropriate means (i.e., signs, locks, guard, fencing, police patrol, etc.).

2.b. Task Descriptions and Budget Table

2.b.i. Task Descriptions

Task 1: Property Inventory – Under this task the Municipality will prepare a physical inventory of abandoned properties potentially contaminated with hazardous substances located in the urban zone of the Municipality (over 300 properties). This task includes: (1) collecting property data (i.e., address, current use, current owner, size, physical coordinates); (2) developing the database with collected data; (3) merging the database with GIS mapping; and (4) preparing reports. The cost associated with this task includes: professional services, software, and maintenance. The estimated cost for Task 1 is approximately \$10,000.

Task 2: Environmental Assessments – Under this task the Municipality will conduct at least ten (10) Environmental Assessment Phase I and at least three (3) Environmental Assessment Phase II. This task will be conducted by an environmental contractor, which will be selected as per the Commonwealth and Federal government a competition process and requirements. The Environmental Assessments Phase I will be conducted as per EP All Appropriate Inquiries Rule and the ASTM 1527-13 protocol. The average cost of an Environmental Assessment Phase I in Puerto Rico is approximately \$3,500 per property. The estimated cost for 10 Environmental Assessment Phase I is approximately \$35,000 (10 properties x \$3,500). This task also includes at least three (3) Environmental Assessments Phase II. Each Environmental Assessment Phase II requires a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) and a Sampling Plan. In order to facilitate the review of these technical documents, the Municipality will use the EPA approved QAPP templates. An average cost per Environmental Assessment Phase II for a brownfields hazardous substance property in Puerto Rico is approximately \$30,000. The estimated cost for four (4) Environmental Assessment Phase II is \$90,000 (3 properties x \$30,000). The estimated cost for Task 2 is approximately \$125,000.

Task 3: Cleanup/End Use Plans – Under this task the Municipality will prepare at least one cleanup plan and one end use plan. The cleanup plan should include proposed cleanup alternatives for the contamination found at the property and a cost estimate associated with the recommended cleanup alternative. For cost purposes, it is estimated a lump sum of \$2,500. The Municipality will prepare one end use plan for a property that should be consistent with the approved Plan. For cost purposes, it is estimated a lump sum of \$1,000. The estimated cost for Task 3 is approximately \$3,500.

Task 4: Project Management – Due to the lack of technical expertise of the Municipality, it will contract the professional services of a Project Manager to oversight the work to be performed by the environmental contractor (Task 2 and 3). The Municipality will follow its procurement protocols for professional services. This task includes: (1) assisting on the preparation of the technical RFP; (2) evaluating technical proposals and providing recommendations; (3) reviewing and providing comments on environmental assessment phase I reports; (4) reviewing providing comments on QAPP and Sampling Plans; (5) reviewing and providing comments on environmental assessment phase II reports; (6) reviewing and providing comments on cleanup and end use plans; and (6) ensuring compliance with project timeline. The estimated cost for Task 4 is approximately \$30,000.

Task 5: Community Engagement - This task includes all the activities related to community engagement, outreach, notification and education. The Municipality will contract the professional services of a Community Involvement Coordinator to carry out all the arrangements associated with this task. The Municipality will follow its procurement protocols for professional services. The Municipality is committed to develop partnership with the community-based organizations established in the municipality and at state level. For cost purposes, it is estimated a total of \$15,000 for the Community Involvement Coordinator. This task also includes costs associated with supplies (i.e. paper, ink, brochures, audiovisual, projectors, screens, etc.) for a total of \$6,000. In addition, the Municipality estimate a total of \$10,500 for travel to the 2017 Brownfields Conference. For cost purposes, it is estimated three persons traveling to the 2017 Brownfields Conference at \$3,500 per person for a total of \$10,500. The estimated cost for Task 5 is \$31,500.00.

2.b.ii. Budget Table

Budget Categories	Task 1 Property Inventory	Task 2 Environmental Assessments	Task 3 Cleanup/End Use Plans	Task 4 Project Management	Task 5 Community Engagement	Total
Contractual	\$10,000	\$125,000	\$3,500	\$30,000	\$15,000	\$183,500
Supplies					\$6,000	\$6,000
Travel					\$10,500	\$10,500
Total	\$10,000	\$125,000	\$3,500	\$30,000	\$31,500	\$200,000

2.c. Ability to Leverage

Puerto Rico is experiencing the worst financial situation in history, to the degree of a bipartisan bill in the United States Congress was passed and signed by President Obama in 2016. The Puerto Rico Oversight, Management, and Economic Stability Act (PROMESA) establishes an oversight board, a process for restructuring debt, and expedited procedures for approving critical infrastructure projects in order to combat the Puerto Rican government-debt crisis. It enables the island's government to enter a bankruptcy-like restructuring process and halt litigation in case of default. The oversight board is to facilitate negotiations, or, if these fail, bring about a court-supervised process akin to a bankruptcy. The board is also responsible for overseeing and monitoring sustainable budgets. PROMESA also includes the creation of a Revitalization Coordinator to promote economic development for Puerto Rico. The current fiscal condition of the Government of Puerto Rico limits the ability of the Municipality to leverage funds from the central government. Nevertheless, the Municipality has obtained several grants from the Federal

Agencies (i.e. Housing and Urban Development, Rural Development, Economic Development Authority) that have been critical in our revitalization goals. For example: Downtown public parking & acquisition of vehicles to serve people with disabilities and trolleys to serve the community. This project was funded by the Federal Transit Administration and the Municipality. In addition, the Municipality is working in establishing partnerships with Commonwealth agencies, such as: Puerto Rico Housing Department, Puerto Rico Department of Transportation and Public Works, Puerto Rico Department of Natural Resources and the Environment, and Puerto Rico Tourism Company to assist on the redevelopment and revitalization of the Municipality as per its Land Use Plan. The Municipality also has been identifying non-profit organizations (i.e., San Juan Bay Estuary, universities, environmental groups) and private organizations (i.e., real estate agencies, banks, developers) to create partnerships in order to leverage additional resources (financial and technical) to complete the redevelopment and revitalization of the community.

As mentioned before, the current and limited municipal budget is designated to provide essential services to the residents (i.e., housing & cost of living assistance, rehabilitation of housing, security, etc.), so that the costs for environmental studies for the hundreds of abandoned properties in the Municipality are not contemplated. However, if the Municipality obtains this grant, it is committed to support the completion of the project by assigning at least a 15% of its Planning Office annual gross salaries for the three (3) year project period (approximately \$57,938.00) as in-kind contribution to address all the administrative expenses and programmatic expenses (oversight contractors, progress reports, briefings, etc.).

3. Community Engagement and Partnerships

3.a. Engaging the Community

3.a.i. Community Involvement Plan

The Municipality has a lot experience dealing with communities. For this project, the Municipality will outline a Brownfields Community Involvement Plan. This plan will be focused on conducting community engagement activities such as: conducting meeting with residents; community-based groups; citizen's groups; business owners; developers; and non-profit organizations, to inform about the project and obtain feedback (property selection, priorities, cleanup alternatives, reuse alternatives, opportunities, etc.). These meetings will be held at the local communities to facilitate the community participation. In addition, the meetings will be announced in the local businesses using flyers and local free newspapers (Vocero, Metro, Indice). In addition, as part of the partnership with local groups, the Municipality will be participating on local group meeting to provide updates on the project and ask for input. Although, the 99% of the population in the Municipality speak Spanish, if required, translation services will be provided, as well as a silence language translator for those members of the community with hearing impediments. The outreach material will be prepared mostly in Spanish. In order to attract business and developers, the Municipality will be conducting Brownfields orientation meetings and face-to-face with business owners and potential investors.

3.a.ii. Communicating Progress

The Municipality will celebrate quarterly community meetings to communicate and involve the target community and the community in general in the development of the proposed project. Communication strategies will include the use of plain Spanish to discuss project progress,

activities coordination or any other issue brought to the attention of Project Managers or to the meeting participants. In addition, for each quarterly meeting, a Meeting Report will be produced and made available for public exam and comments, at the Municipal Planning Office. In addition to the public announcements in the free local newspapers, the Municipality also will be addressing the uses of social media like, Facebook, Twitter or Instagram in order to broaden information distribution.

3.b. Partnership with Government Agencies

3.b.i. Local/State/Tribal Environmental Authority

The municipality will share the environmental assessments findings with the Puerto Rico Department of Health (PRDOH), Environmental Health Program. The information will allow the PRDOH Environmental Health Program to have reliable environmental data that can be used for epidemiologic studies in the area. The Municipality is planning to establish a partnership with the PRDOH to develop a health-monitoring program at the targeted community. Also, the Municipality has established a long-term relationship with the Puerto Rico Environmental Quality Board (PREQB) and will provide copies of the Brownfields properties inventory to assist them in their Puerto Rico Brownfields Property Inventory prepared as part of their Voluntary Cleanup and Brownfields Program. Since PREQB is establishing the program, so that the Municipality will be consulting with them about the cleanup levels to be used in the recommendation of cleanup alternatives as part of the cleanup plan. The Municipality will work closely with PREQB and PRDOH to ensure the protectiveness of the community during the investigation process by consulting with them about protectiveness measures to community members while conducting soil, surface water, groundwater sampling. Also, PREQB and PRDOH have environmental educational programs that the Municipality plans to incorporate as part of its Brownfields Community Involvement Plan.

3.b.ii. Other Relevant Governmental Partnerships

The Municipality will continue the partnership with the Puerto Rico Housing Department to continue supporting the affordable housing projects in the Municipality. In addition, the Municipality will establish a partnership with the Puerto Rico Industrial Development Company to facilitate the access to their industrial facilities for assessment and to obtain assistance on identifying prospector developers. Also, since the Municipality has one of the most important natural reserve in the heart of the urban metropolitan area of Puerto Rico, “Cienaga Las Cucharillas”, a partnership with the Puerto Rico Department of Natural Resources and the Environment is very important to ensure any redevelopment and revitalization project does not impact this reserve. Establishing a partnership with the Puerto Rico Tourism Company will assist the Municipality on developing a tourism strategic plan to promote the tourism in the Municipality.

3.C. Partnership with Community Organizations

3.C.i. Community Organization Description & Role

The Municipality of Cataño has committed with the following organizations in order to provide a broader community outreach and participation. Organizations like; (1) *Corredor del Yaguazo, Inc*, recipient of 2014 Environmental Quality Award, is a community based organization with more than 20 years dedicated promoting environmental conservation through education, seminars

and collaborative agreements with local universities. The organization will provide support in the assessment by evaluating sites and providing community outreach, end use determination assistance and to promote the project goals by educational workshops and conference. (2) *The San Juan Bay Estuary Consortium*, which is a private organization awarded with the People's Choice Award at the 2013 EPA Community Involvement Training Conference and recipient of an EPA grant and State matching grant to develop educational and preservation activities related to the San Juan Bay Estuary, will help in the guidance for reuse and restoration site process in order to conform to the best practices on environmental conservation and preservation of the San Juan Bay estuarine area in conjunction with Las Cucharillas Natural Reserve. (3) *Asociación Pro Juventud y Comunidad Barrio Palmas de Cataño*, is a nonprofit organization, awarded with the 2013 received Tina Hills Price from Angel Ramos Foundation for Community Service. The organization works directly with Cataño youth, especially in Barrio Palmas area, a community over 24,000 persons. They will help identify potential site and community outreach through educational workshops. (4) *Junta Comunitaria de La Puntilla*, (5) *Comunidad Organizada de Puente Blanco* and *Cucharillas Community Center* are also, nonprofit organizations that work directly with their respective communities. Communities that are the most vulnerable (children & elderly) and economically disadvantaged. The support of these organizations would be essential for the public education and outreach.

3.C.ii. Letters of Commitment

Please refer to Attachment D for the Letters of Commitments

3.d. Partnership with Community Organizations

In 2015, Puerto Rico was awarded a Brownfield Job Training Grant through PathStone. They are offering asbestos & lead inspector's certification, hazardous materials drivers and sampling technicians. The Municipality will contact PathStone to let them know about our request for funding, and once the funds are awarded, we will establish a partnership in order to be able to employ graduates from these programs. The Municipality is committed to highly encourage the selected environmental contractor to hire graduates from the PathStone BF program, as feasible as possible.

4. Project Benefits

4.a. Welfare, Environmental, and Public Health Benefits

Welfare: It is known that dilapidated and abandoned structures are prone to be used as drug houses and other illicit uses that will contribute to the neglect and impoverishment of the community. By rescuing these properties, we can redefine their uses. If the properties are renovated it will create a betterment on the community making a safer area and increasing the property values within the Municipality. In other instances, if the best action is to demolish or clear the property, it will create more space for redevelopment. All actions will create an effect of lowering crime rate, increase the tax revenue (regain of approx. 25% in municipal patent, yearly) and also will lower poverty rate, due to the in site job creation reducing dependency on other federal or local welfare programs.

Environmental Benefits: Indirectly, this grant will protect the ecological sensitive area "*La Ciénaga las Cucharillas*". This ecological sensitive area consists of approximately 1,000 acres of herb marsh and wetland, which has recently become a protected natural reserve area. It is one

of the largest herb marsh areas in the San Juan Metropolitan area and a very important element of the San Juan Bay Estuary (designated as a national estuary). This project will allow to preserve and protect this area by characterizing selected properties and generating environmental data use to be used for development of municipal ordinances to protect, preserve and provide long-term planning and management for the area. Another environmental sensitive area that would benefit from this assessment would be the Río Bayamón and Río Hondo, two rivers that separate the industrial areas from some of the residential area. In addition, assessing the selected properties will provide the environmental data needed to either cleanup them or remove the stigma that has prevented their development.

Public Health Benefits: - The project will provide crucial environmental data that will be shared with the Puerto Rico Department of Health (PRDOH) in order to be used in more in depth studies regarding the presence of hazardous materials and the relationship with diseases like: cancer & asthma. The prevalence of Asthma in adults & children's in Puerto Rico is higher than the USA. In Puerto Rico, the prevalence in adults is 10.6 and in the USA is 8.9; in children's, Puerto Rico has 13.8 and USA is 9.3¹⁰, Cancer prevalence at the Municipality is 410.0 per 100,000 persons, Puerto Rico is 421.5 per 100,000 persons, making the Municipality one of the highest in Puerto Rico¹¹. The results of the environmental assessments conducted on the abandoned properties, will clarify to, residents living nearby these properties, all concerns related to exposure to contamination.

4.b. Economic and Community Benefits

The residents of the targeted community will benefit from this grant in several ways. First, they will have a reduced potential exposure to hazardous contaminants as the characterization of selected properties enhances the potential remediation of affected areas. Second, it would provide additional and appropriate land space for housing development. Third, it would allow the restoration of the affected sectors and their ecological system. Fourth, it would expand the redevelopment opportunities through a corrective plan and end use determination in accordance with the Municipality Land Use Plan. Fifth, residents will benefit from an improved quality of life by reducing the high rate of crimes, as their area will be redeveloped into healthier, suitable and productive community. Finally, it would improve the residents' economic situation by creating several indirect and direct jobs and services, which will come with neighborhood redevelopment and revitalization. This grant will support the effort to promote economic benefit in the targeted community by enhancing the property values, restoration of ecological sensitive areas and job creation.

The municipality is committed to provide methods to create or enact self-sustainable communities. The main goal of this project is to provide opportunities to the communities in order to enhance their safety, health, living standard and urban and natural integration with safe and sound environmental practices. Using the smart growth concepts, the project will characterize properties with the potential of being reused to provide new affordable and denser housing (like home for the elderly), green designs that not just are energy efficient but

¹⁰ Asthma Burden Report 2014, Puerto Rico Asthma Program, <http://nebula.wsimg.com/4c4e1265d6ce49a6bfd67c035e954213?AccessKeyId=036DD2B5D5CF18C9F639&disposition=0&alloworigin=1>

¹¹ Age- Adjusted Incidence Rates by County in Puerto Rico, All Cancer Sites, 2012, Central Registry of Cancer for Puerto Rico, <http://www.rcpr.org/Datos-de-C%C3%A1ncer/Tasas-y-Mapas>

ecologically sensible. The reuse and redevelopment will have an impact on the community by transforming their spaces and improvement of the quality of life bringing new jobs, an increase on the property values and an increase on the mobility with better transportation methods. This could be attained by integrating actual public transportation systems to the extension and integration of the current trolley system to serve other parts of the community.

5. Programmatic Capability and Past Performance

5.a. Audit Findings

Despite the fact that we have been the object of findings on previous years, on the diversity federal programs that we manage, the findings do not constitute serious, illegal actions. The Municipality has not been the subject of investigation from any federal agency related to funds mismanagement, embezzlement of funds, fraud or other related felonies or charges. There were three (3) findings on the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program on the 2015 audit and consists of having the funds on the general account for more than 3 days. The findings, as defined, were corrected immediately. Currently, the Municipality does not have any outstanding audit findings.

5.b. Programmatic Capability

During fiscal year 2015-2016, the Consolidated Budget of the Municipality of Cataño totaled \$45,412,400.00, this includes federal funds, state assignments, and general ordinary funds generated by municipal income. The Municipal Government of Cataño is organized in a Legislative body and an Executive Branch. Executive Branch is responsible for supervising and implementing its government program geared to attend the different needs of its constituents. Currently, the Municipality manages approximately \$5 million on federal funds. The Municipality is managing federal funds from: Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), 21st Century Community Learning Centers grant from the U.S Department of Education, Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) from the U.S Department of Agriculture, Child Care Grant Program from the U.S Department of Education, Federal Transit Administration Grants (FTA), HOME Program, Universal Service Administrative Company, Head Start, Hazard Mitigation among others. The municipal finances are subject to the procedures established by State Law 81 of August 30, 1991 and to the Regulation of Basic Norms of 1995, and all applicable federal laws and regulations. Under the Executive Branch there are five (5) areas that manage federal grants: (1) Office of Federal Programs, (2) Planning Office, (3) Housing Department, (4) Department of Assistance to the Citizen, and (5) Department of Finances. This grant will be managed by the municipality Planning Office (PO) with the administrative support of the Finance Department (FD). The Director of the Planning Office will be responsible for the complete overseas of the project including the reporting requirements. The PO will also contribute with a Planner, technical and clerical personnel. The FD will contribute with all the accounting, audit and contracting process. The responsible party will be the Finance Director.

In addition, the Municipality has an Auction Committee for the selection of the best contractors according with each funding or activity regulations. The Committee is ruled and created by a Municipal Ordinance number 16 Series 2012-2013, named *Internal Ruling and Guidance of the Municipality of Cataño Auction Committee*. This Committee is composed of five (5) members of which, four (4) are municipality officials and (1) is a representative of the public interest. Two of the municipal officials are: Finance Director and the Public Works Director.

Once identify the funds and needs, the Planning Office will create the guidelines and requirements of the proposal, then it will be approved for announcement. Once the Committee received all proposal it will evaluate them and select the one that meets all requirements and criteria, proceeding with the contract.

5.C. Measuring Environmental Results: Anticipated Outputs and Outcomes

The Municipality will develop a plan with the main objectives and a reasonable time table that will be administered by the Project Manager. This plan will design as a Pert Chart that will include needed resources, time table and responsible agent.

5.d. Past Performance and Accomplishment

5.d.i. Currently or Has Ever Received and EPA Brownfields Grant

1. Accomplishments

In 2007, the Municipality was awarded a Brownfield grant with \$200,000 for petroleum assessment. The Municipality prepared a Brownfields Petroleum Properties Inventory containing a total of twenty-nine (29) properties. Of the total properties inventoried, nine (9) of them were selected for Phase I and five (5) for Phase II. All selected properties were added in ACRES.

2. Compliance with Grant Requirements

Local EPA and the municipality personnel began the coordination to prepare the bidding process and the presentation of the request for proposal (RFP) of the firm that will perform the site inventory and Phase 1 studies. The RFP was published at the beginning of 2008, but the selection was delayed due to administrative problems and the 2008 general elections that resulted in a change of administration. As the new administration took knowledge of the project needs and the key personnel was appointed, the RFP process was delayed again. In October 2010, the selection of the firm was awarded and began the site inventory. The preliminary site inventory was completed in March 2011. After meetings with EPA, community representatives and leader, and the municipality; EPA reviewed and recommended four (4) sites for Phase I. At the end of 2011, the Phase I documentation was sent to EPA for evaluation. The project process was again delayed due to administrative problems involving the contractual process and the new fiscal year budget. During the first quarter of 2013, the decision about the selected sites for Phase II was delayed considerably even though the Municipality made a preliminary selection of potential sites to perform Phase II. We decided to evaluated others sites within the urban core of the Municipality, which could be a better location for our Brownfield redevelopment efforts. Therefore, we considered, from an economic wise perspective, to complete the additional Site Assessments (Phase I) after proper coordination with EPA and selecting the best sites to carry out Phase II. In 2014, the project was successfully completed. From the \$200,000.00 budget \$126,723.00 were used and a total of \$73,277.00 were unobligated balance. All reports were submitted on time although some showed no new actions. Data from final Phase II sites was entered on the ACRES reporting system. The lessons learned during the processes gave the Municipality more experience in order to have a better administrative management skill for future projects.

Appendix 3 - Regional Priorities Form/Other Factors Checklist

Name of Applicant: Municipality of Cataño, Puerto Rico

Regional Priorities Other Factor

If your proposed Brownfields Assessment project will advance the regional priority(ies) identified in Section I.F., please indicate the regional priority(ies) and the page number(s) for where the information can be found within your 15-page narrative. Only address the priority(ies) for the region in which your project is located. EPA will verify these disclosures prior to selection and may consider this information during the selection process. If this information is not clearly discussed in your narrative proposal, it will not be considered during the selection process.

Regional Priority Title(s):

Assistance to Communities that have limited in-house capacity to manage Brownfields Projects

Page Number(s): 1-3, 5 & 10

Assessment Other Factors Checklist

Please identify (with an **x**) which, if any, of the below items apply to your community or your project as described in your proposal. To be considered for an Other Factor, you must include the page number where each applicable factor is discussed in your proposal. EPA will verify these disclosures prior to selection and may consider this information during the selection process. If this information is not clearly discussed in your narrative proposal or in any other attachments, it will not be considered during the selection process.

Other Factor	Page #
<i>None of the Other Factors are applicable.</i>	
Community population is 10,000 or less.	
Applicant is, or will assist, a federally recognized Indian tribe or United States territory.	
Target brownfield sites are impacted by mine-scarred land.	
Project is primarily focusing on Phase II assessments.	
Applicant demonstrates firm leveraging commitments for facilitating brownfield project completion by identifying amounts and contributors of funding in the proposal and have included documentation.	
X Recent (2008 or later) significant economic disruption has occurred within community, resulting in a significant percentage loss of community jobs and tax base.	1-5
Applicant is one of the 24 recipients, or a core partner/implementation strategy party, of a “manufacturing community” designation provided by the Economic	

<p>Development Administration (EDA) under the Investing in Manufacturing Communities Partnership (IMCP). To be considered, applicants must clearly demonstrate in the proposal the nexus between their IMCP designation and the Brownfield activities. Additionally, applicants must attach documentation which demonstrate either designation as one of the 24 recipients, or relevant pages from a recipient’s IMCP proposal which lists/describes the core partners and implementation strategy parties.</p>	
<p>Applicant is a recipient or a core partner of HUD-DOT-EPA Partnership for Sustainable Communities (PSC) grant funding or technical assistance that is directly tied to the proposed Brownfields project, and can demonstrate that funding from a PSC grant/technical assistance has or will benefit the project area. Examples of PSC grant or technical assistance include a HUD Regional Planning or Challenge grant, DOT Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER), or EPA Smart Growth Implementation or Building Blocks Assistance, etc. To be considered, applicant must attach documentation.</p>	
<p>Applicant is a recipient of an EPA Brownfields Area-Wide Planning grant.</p>	



November 16, 2016

Hon. José A. Rosario-Meléndez
Mayor
Municipality of Cataño
PO Box 428
Cataño, PR 00963-0428

Honorable Mayor Rosario-Meléndez:

MUNICIPALITY OF CATAÑO ACKNOWLEDGEMENT LETTER FOR THE INTENTION TO APPLY FOR FY-17 U.S. EPA BROWNFIELD'S PROGRAM FOR A COMMUNITY-WIDE ASSESMENT GRANT FOR HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES

The Puerto Rico Environmental Quality Board (PREQB) Superfund Program has received a letter from the municipality of Cataño informing its intention to apply for a Brownfields Community-Wide Assessment Grant for Hazardous Substances. PREQB acknowledges and supports the initiative taken by the Municipality. The identification, inventory development, assessment, cleanup and redevelopment of Brownfields sites will provide an opportunity to enhance the social, economic and environmental conditions in this municipality.

PREQB encourages the municipality to maintain an open communication with federal and state agencies and to request any support needed.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Mr. Luis A. Rodríguez-Rodríguez, Environmental Emergencies Response Area Manager, at (787) 767-8181, extensions 3234, 3236, or by e-mail at luisrodriguez@jca.pr.gov.

Cordially,

Weldin F. Ortiz Franco, Executive Director
Puerto Rico Environmental Quality Board

LARR/OESS

c Ramón Torres, USEPA



December 14, 2016

Lya Theodoratos
290 Broadway; 18th Floor
New York, NY 10007

RE: MUNICIPALITY OF CATAÑO BROWNFIELD GRANT PROPOSAL

Dear Mrs. Theodoratos:

The Municipality of Cataño has request our support in their effort of applying for Brownfields funds under the 2017 Assessment Grants. The municipality has informed us that those funds would be used to create an impact in our community improving the urban, social, economic and environmental quality by assessing possible contaminated properties county wide.

As a nonprofit organization that emphasis on environmental justice, we understand that Brownfields studies would help greatly on the identification of abandoned or unused properties that had become an environmental issue due to their possible contamination with hazardous substances that would end up in our community and natural areas.

Our organizations has been working for more than 20 years, developing seminars, workshops, research, collaborative agreements with the University of Puerto Rico, environmental stewardship programs and also we are the co-managers with the Department of Natural & Environmental Resources of Las Cucharillas Marsh, which is an State Natural Reserve Area (see our web page: www.facebook.com/corredordelyaguazo). We have been awarded with the 2007 and 2014 Environmental Quality Award from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

This is why we support this kind of efforts by the Municipality of Cataño in order to address problems related to abandoned structures, vandalism, drug trafficking areas, devaluation of property; all problems that would impinges directly on the environment and quality of life of our community.

Sincerely,

Pedro Carrión Huertas
Director
Corredor del Yaguazo, Inc.



December 5, 2016

Lya Theodoratos
290 Broadway; 18th Floor
New York, NY 10007

RE: MUNICIPALITY OF CATAÑO BROWNFIELD GRANT PROPOSAL

Dear Mrs. Theodoratos:

The Corporation for the Conservation of the San Juan Bay Estuary, Inc. (The San Juan Bay Estuary Program – SJBEP) has received a letter from the Municipality of Cataño notifying its intention to apply for a Brownfields Community Wide Assessment Grant for Hazardous Substance. SJBEP endorses and exalts the importance of said initiative.

The San Juan Bay Estuary (SJBE) was accepted into the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) National Estuary Program (NEP) in October 1992. EPA's National Estuary Program is a non-regulatory program established by Congress that works to improve the waters, habitats and living resources of 28 estuaries across the country. Each NEP consists of diverse local stakeholders that develop and implement a long-term plan (called a Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan or CCMP) based on local priorities to guide their efforts. The CCMP serves as a blueprint to guide future decisions and addresses a wide range of environmental protection issues, including: water quality, habitat, fish and wildlife, pathogens, land use, and introduced species.

SJBEP, inaugurated in 1995, has as part of its mission the successful implementation of the CCMP. The mission is to protect and restore the health of the estuary while supporting economic and recreational activities. SJBEP is responsible for the adequacy of the bodies of water that allow the main commercial activities in the island. Annually, 80% of the products that are imported to PR arrive through the estuary; over 1.3 million visitors arrive by cruise ships and 9.8 million by air.

The identification, inventory, assessment, cleanup and redevelopment of Brownfields sites will provide an opportunity to boost the social, economic and environmental conditions. Those actions are of utmost impact to the San Juan Bay Estuary. SJBEP commends the Municipality of Cataño for its initiative to conduct a **Community Wide Hazardous Waste Assessment under EPA's Brownfield's Program**. If you need additional information you may contact me at (787) 725-8165 or btorres@estuario.org

Thank you,

Brenda Torres, MEM & LEED AP
Executive Director

December 12, 2016

Ms. Lya Theodoratos
290 Broadway; 18th Floor
New York, NY 10007

RE: MUNICIPALITY OF CATAÑO BROWNFIELD GRANT PROPOSAL

Dear Ms. Theodoratos:

"Asociación Pro-Juventud Comunidad Barrio Palmas" is a community organization that works directly with Cataño youth. The same community and youth that have been struggling with many decades of health problems related to environmental contamination. These situations are increasing with the amount of abandoned properties that could be contaminated with hazardous materials due to their past uses and building materials because they were built near the 1970's.

The Administration of the Municipality of Cataño has requested our support in their effort of apply for Brownfields funds under the 2017 Assessment Grants. With these funds, the Municipality will perform an assessment of properties all over the municipality with suspicion of hazardous materials contamination.

As a community organization we look forward to work with the municipality in every aspect that will benefit the quality of life of our community specially our children's. We believe that these actions would generate a positive impact in our community which is in such need of this kind of affirmative actions in order to improve the quality of life and our environment.

Cordially,



María I. Torres Ramos
Executive Director
"Asociación Pro-Juventud Comunidad Barrio Palmas"

No se discrimina por razón de edad, color sexo, raza, origen nacional o impedimento, ideales políticos o religiosos.



JUNTA COMUNITARIA DE LA PUNTILLA, INC.

December 8, 2016

Ms. Lya Theodoratos
290 Broadway; 18th Floor
New York, NY 10007

RE: MUNICIPALITY OF CATAÑO BROWNFIELD GRANT PROPOSAL

Dear Ms. Theodoratos:

The Municipality of Cataño has requested our support in their effort of applying for Brownfields funds under the 2017 Assessment Grants. With these funds, the Municipality will perform an assessment of properties all over the municipality with suspect of hazardous materials contamination.

The mission of our organization, "La Junta Comunitaria de la Puntilla, Inc." is to provide recreational activities specifically to the children's and youth residents but also support a wide variety of services to the rest of the community. We have been established and formally incorporated since 2004. La Puntilla area is located at the core urban area of the municipality. Historically, La Puntilla has been the port of entry of goods coming from the ship yards of San Juan to Cataño and Bayamón. It is one of the reasons that many industries, stores and warehouses were located here. These days it has become mostly a residential area with some business and restaurants.

We strongly believe that the proposed actions would create positive impact in our community so needed of this kind of engagements in order to improve the quality of life of our environment. As we stated, our location at the urban core of the municipality has contributed to many decades of hardships related to properties contaminated by hazardous materials due to their past uses. Most of those has become abandoned and represent a threat to the community.

We support the efforts by the Municipality of Cataño to obtain funding under the Brownfield Assessment Grant and are eager to work and join forces with the municipality so that the community involvement would be of great help identifying possible properties that could be contaminating our environment, participate in the community outreach and to create the necessary steps to eliminate such problems from our neighborhood.

Cordially,


Vitaliano Maldonado
President

Comunidad Organizada de Puente Blanco, Inc.

December 12, 2016

Ms. Lya Theodoratos
290 Broadway; 18th Floor
New York, NY 10007

RE: MUNICIPALITY OF CATAÑO BROWNFIELD GRANT PROPOSAL

Dear Ms. Theodoratos:

The Municipality of Cataño has requested our support in their effort of applying for grant funds under the Brownfields 2017 Assessment Grants. With these funds, the Municipality will perform a community wide assessment of properties with suspicion of hazardous materials contamination.

Puente Blanco is a community located south of the municipality with a population over 1,500 and surrounded by heavy industrial and commercial activity. As other communities in Cataño, we have encountered the problem of having abandoned properties that may be contaminated by hazardous substances due to their previous uses. Many of these properties represent a clear risk to our elders and children's which are the most vulnerable to be affected by health problems.

The mission of our organization, "Comunidad Organizada de Puente Blanco, Inc.", is to provide educational support and recreational activities to our youth since. We have been established and providing services to the community since 1999 and formally incorporated in 2009.

We will support the efforts by the Municipality of Cataño and will engage directly with the administration in order to help identifying possible properties that could be contaminating our environment and involving the whole community in activities that would provide consciousness of the problem and work out solutions with them. We will provide community outreach through our educational programs. We can be reach by email at, www.figueroa7@gmail.com.

Cordially,


Wanda Figueroa
Executive Director





ESTADO LIBRE ASOCIADO DE
PUERTO RICO

Oficina de la Coordinadora General
para el Financiamiento Socioeconómico
y la Autogestión

30 de noviembre de 2016

Lya Theodoratos
290 Broadway; 18th Floor
New York, NY 1007

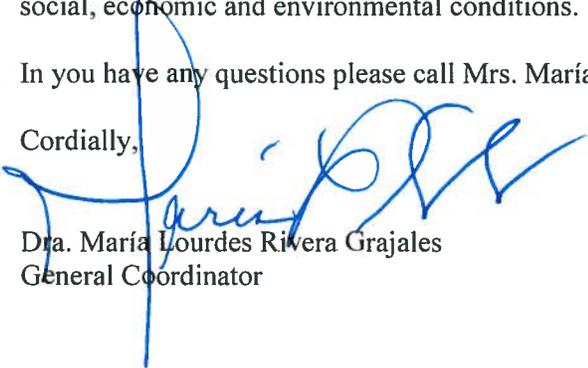
Re: Municipality of Cataño Brownfield Grant Proposal

Dear Mrs. Theodoratos:

The Special Community Office received a letter from the Municipality of Cataño stating the intention of requesting Brownfields funds. We have review the information provided by the municipality and has acknowledged the requesting of grands funds to conduct a “Community Wide Hazardous Waste Assessment under Enviornmental Protection Agency Brownfield’s Program”. The Municipality would have the opportunity to perform an inventory and redevelopment of Brownfields sites to enhance their social, economic and environmental conditions.

In you have any questions please call Mrs. María de los Angeles Torres, (787) 977-7060 ext. 2018.

Cordially,



Dra. María Lourdes Rivera Grajales
General Coordinator



December 19, 2016

Lya Theodoratos
290 Broadway; 18th Floor
New York, NY 10007

RE: MUNICIPALITY OF CATAÑO BROWNFIELD GRANT PROPOSAL

Dear Mrs. Theodoratos:

The State Housing Department (SHD) has received a letter from the Municipality of Cataño announcing its' intention of requesting Brownfields funds. SHD has review the information provided by the municipality and has acknowledged that they are requesting grant funds to conduct a **"Community Wide Hazardous Waste Assessment under Environmental Protection Agency Brownfield's Program"**.

This endorsement does not imply any financial commitment by the Department of Housing.

If you have any questions please call Carlos Castillo Matos, Assistant Secretary for Strategic Planning (787) 274-2527, ext. 6501.

Cordially,

Alberto Lastra Power
Secretary of Housing

Applicant Eligibility

The grant applicant is the Municipality of Cataño, Puerto Rico. The Municipality of Cataño is an eligible grant applicant as it is a local government entity constituted under the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico in 1927, and governed by Law Number 81 of August 30, 1991, as amended, known as "Law of Municipal Autonomy", as defined under 2 CFR 200.64 (c).