



Narrative Information Sheet

1. Applicant Identification

Cortland County Industrial Development Agency
40 Main Street
Cortland, NY 13045

2. Website url

<https://www.cortlandcountyida.com/>

3. Funding Requested

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

4. Location

- a. City – Cortland
- b. County – Cortland
- c. State – New York

5. Target Area and Priority Site/Property Information

- Target Areas: City of Cortland, Village of Homer
- Census Tract Numbers:
 - i. City of Cortland: 9705, 9706, 9707, 9708, 9709
 - ii. Village of Homer: 9703
 - iii. Other: 9701, 9711, 9712
- Address of Priority Sites:
 - i. City of Cortland: 45-47 Cleveland Street, 84 Owego Street, 30-42 Pine Street, 17-24 Crawford, Street, 85, 99 Madison Street, 25 Wheeler Avenue, 3827 Route 11, 1076 Route 13, 4284 Traction Drive, Route 11 site
 - ii. Village of Homer: 6735 Route 41, 30 South West Street, 7 Pine Street, 37-43 James Street, 4 Center Street
 - iii. Other: 75 Cortland Street, Marathon; 6844 East Keeney Road Extension Truxton; 1700 Route 392 Virgil, NY

6. Contacts

a. Project Director

Brendan O'Bryan, Executive Director/CEO
Cortland County Industrial Development Agency
(607) 756-5005
brendan@cortlandbusiness.com
40 Main Street, Cortland, NY 13045

b. Chief Executive/Higher Ranking Elected Official

Brendan O'Bryan, Executive Director/CEO
Cortland County Industrial Development Agency
(607) 756-5005
brendan@cortlandbusiness.com
40 Main Street, Cortland, NY 13045

7. Population

Cortland County, NY: 45,752
City of Cortland: 17,276
Village of Homer: 3,210
Town of Cortlandville: 8,286
Town of Marathon: 2,038
Town of Truxton: 997
Town of Virgil: 2,425

8. Other Factors

Other Factors	Page #
Community population is 15,000 or less.	n/a
The applicant is, or will assist, a federally recognized Indian Tribe or United States Territory.	n/a
The priority site(s) is impacted by mine-scarred land.	n/a
The priority site(s) is adjacent to a body of water (i.e., the border of the priority site(s) is contiguous or partially contiguous to the body of water, or would be contiguous or partially contiguous with a body of water but for a street, road, or other public thoroughfare separating them).	1, 3-4
The priority site(s) is in a federally designated flood plain.	n/a
The reuse of the priority site(s) will facilitate renewable energy from wind, solar, or geothermal energy.	3-4
The reuse of the priority site(s) will incorporate energy efficiency measures.	4
The proposed project will improve local climate adaptation/mitigation capacity and resilience to protect residents and community investments.	4
At least 30% of the overall project budget will be spent on eligible reuse/area-wide planning activities, as described in Section I.B., for priority site(s) within the target area(s).	9
The target area(s) is impacted by a coal-fired power plant that has recently closed (2014 or later) or is closing.	n/a

9. Letter from the State or Tribal Environmental Authority - Attached

10. Releasing Copies of Applications - n/a

NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION

Division of Environmental Remediation, Bureau of Program Management
625 Broadway, 12th Floor, Albany, NY 12233-7012
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October 28, 2024

Brendan O'Bryan
Executive Director/CEO
Cortland County Industrial Development Agency
40 Main Street
Cortland, NY 13045

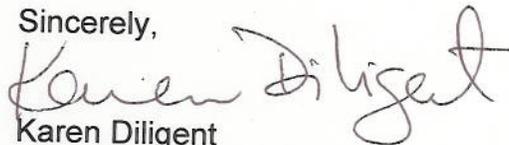
Dear Mr. O'Bryan:

This is to acknowledge that the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) received a request from C&S Companies, on behalf of the Cortland County Industrial Development Agency (IDA), dated October 28, 2024, for a state acknowledgement letter for a Federal Year 2025 United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) Brownfields grant.

I understand that the Cortland County IDA plans to submit a Brownfield Community-Wide Assessment grant application for \$500,000. Focus of the funding will be to conduct Phase I and II Environmental Site Assessments at targeted sites throughout Cortland County. Funding will also be allocated for associated planning (including reuse and/or remediation planning) and community involvement activities. Please note that the USEPA criteria for an assessment grant specifies that, if selected, the Cortland County IDA may only expend up to \$200,000 of the grant on a specific site.

DEC encourages initiatives to redevelop brownfields with the goal of mitigating any environmental and health impacts that they might pose.

Sincerely,



Karen Diligent
Director, Bureau of Program Management

cc: T. Wesley, USEPA Region 2
Y. DeJesus, USEPA Region 2
G. Priscott, DEC Region 7
S. Lizlovs, DEC Region 7
S. Stewart, C&S Companies



Department of
Environmental
Conservation

1. PROJECT AREA DESCRIPTION AND PLANS FOR REVITALIZATION

1.a. Target Area and Brownfields

1.a.i. Overview of Brownfield Challenges and Description of Target Area: Cortland County is located in the heart of the Central New York (CNY) region. Composed of 15 towns and villages, the County embodies a mix of rural agricultural areas and small villages, with a strong urban center in the City of Cortland. Known as the Eastern Gateway to the Finger Lakes of NYS, it is situated halfway between Syracuse and Binghamton. Cortland County is bisected by Interstate-81, which sees thousands of vehicles traveling through daily.

The Cortland County Industrial Development Agency (the IDA) is proposing to conduct brownfield assessments county-wide. Brownfields have been a significant challenge for decades in Cortland County, many centered in the City of Cortland, but also throughout other towns and villages. Starting in the mid-1800s, the County was home to several manufacturers, including Smith Corona Marchant (typewriter manufacturing), Wickwire Brothers (foundry), Brockway Motors (truck manufacturing), and Cortland Line Company (fishing and tennis line manufacturing). Industry took a sharp decline in the 1970s, leaving job loss and dozens of large vacant buildings with remnants of past operations and their environmental contaminants, in its wake. The City of Cortland is home to the Rosen Brothers Superfund site, a 20-acre former scrap-metal processing facility contaminated with polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), volatile organic compounds (VOCs), semi-volatile organic compounds (SVOCs), and inorganics that has plagued the community since the 1970s. The site's proximity to residential neighborhoods and schools has been a source of serious concern for decades and has created negative public perceptions of the area, which has discouraged new development.

Empty, dilapidated buildings and lots sit in prominent downtown areas, along the waterfront of the Tioughnioga River, and in the heart of residential neighborhoods. Beyond that, the County has numerous vacant gas stations that are not only unattractive, but their potential contamination poses serious threats to the environment and public health. Cortland County's population has been in decline for decades and is one of the lowest ranking counties in NYS in terms of health outcomes, including high rates of cancers and respiratory disease, levels of lead in children, food deserts, and low access to healthcare.

There are two priority target areas for brownfield assessment. The first is the City of Cortland (pop. 17,276), which at present has no existing greenfields; therefore, any development must occur on already developed sites. The City completed an FY18 EPA Brownfield Assessment Grant, but there are several remaining sites in need of assessment. SUNY Cortland, a growing NYS university, is located in the City. The community strives to maintain its identity as a college town, attracting new students and faculty; however, it is challenging with the negative perceptions due to blight, poverty, and poor health conditions. With so many vacant former industrial lots, the City must identify and address brownfields to spur any further development.

The second Target Area is the Village of Homer (pop. 3,210), just north of the City of Cortland, along the Tioughnioga River. Homer is also plagued with former industrial sites and fuel stations that are sources of blight. The Village is capitalizing on its waterfront to attract new residents, visitors, and developers, using a major investment from NYS's Downtown Revitalization Initiative. Without addressing contaminated and vacant sites, opportunities for progress in these areas will be hindered and public health will continue to be a significant problem.

1.a.ii. Description of the Priority Brownfield Site(s): Through community planning efforts, the IDA has identified over 30 brownfield, abandoned, and/or underutilized sites (totaling over 55 acres) throughout the County. A selection of priority sites is below:

Property Address/Description	Acres	Former Use	Current Use	Potential/Known Contaminants
<i>City of Cortland</i>				
Apex Tools site, 45-47 Cleveland Street	7.8	Metal forging, machining, finishing	Vacant	VOCs, SVOCs, PCBs, metals
84 Owego Street	0.9	Foundry	Scrap metal dealer	Metals
30-42 Pine Street	1	UNK, close proximity to industrial sites	Vacant lot	VOCs, metals, lead
17-24 Crawford Street	4.3	Paint company	Vacant buildings	VOCs
85, 99 Madison Street	2.3	School; shooting range in basement	Vacant	Lead
25 Wheeler Avenue	6.3	Armory	Training space	Lead
3827 Route 11	1.5	Auto body	Auto body/vacant	Petroleum, metals
1076 Route 13	0.6	Gas station/auto dealership	Vacant	VOCs, SVOCs, petroleum
4284 Traction Drive	0.1	Coal-burning electric facility	County Highway Garage	SVOCs
Route 11 site	13.4	Scrapyard	Vacant	Metals, PCBs
<i>Homer, NY</i>				
6735 Route 41	0.3	Fuel station	Vacant	VOCs, SVOCs, petroleum
30 South West Street	1	Fuel station	Vacant	VOCs, SVOCs, petroleum
7 Pine Street	1.2	Textile plant	Vacant	PCBs, lead, VOCs
37-43 James Street	3.6	Industrial/manufacturing	Partially vacant	Hazardous substances
4 Center Street	3.7	Industrial	Vacant	UNK
Route 11	3.3	Body shop/ junkyard	U-Haul	Petroleum, metals, PCBs
<i>Other County sites</i>				
75 Cortland Street, Marathon	0.2	Fuel station	Vacant	VOCs, SVOCs, petroleum
6844 East Keeney Road Extension, Truxton	0.3	General store, fuel station	Diner	VOCs, SVOCs, petroleum
1700 Route 392, Virgil	1.2	Mini-mart/gas station	Vacant	VOCs, SVOCs, petroleum

The Apex Tools site in the City of Cortland includes the remnants of a former manufacturing facility that closed in 2015 and was demolished in 2021. It lies in a residential neighborhood and its former use as a metal forging, machining, and finishing facility has left behind VOCs, SVOCs, PCBs, metals (zinc, lead, cadmium, and arsenic), trichlorofluoromethane, and chloroform (based on a 2021 Phase II Environmental Site Assessment [ESA]). This large, vacant lot has been an eyesore and a source of contamination since 2015, representing significant job loss (100 lost their jobs when the plant closed) and a struggling local economy. The site was assessed using the City's past EPA Assessment Grant, but there are no remaining funds for Cleanup and Reuse Plans. The IDA used \$250,000 of its own money to remove remaining demolition debris. The community has expressed a strong desire for the redevelopment of this site and it is a tremendous opportunity to be transformative for the City of Cortland and Cortland County. A Reuse Plan will refine the redevelopment strategy, as there is potential for light industrial operations, aligning with new chip manufacturing in the CNY region, as well as housing, due to its location in a residential area.

The Parker School, also in the City of Cortland, was established in 1936 and was in operation until 2021 when the school district restructured, but now sits vacant. A Phase I ESA was conducted using the City's FY18 EPA Assessment Grant. Due to its age, lead-based paint and asbestos are likely present in the building. The basement was used as a shooting range for many years and the surrounding soil is likely contaminated with lead. Its location in a residential neighborhood, adjacent to low-income and disadvantaged areas and across the street from a popular park, poses a risk to children who may come into contact with lead in the soil. The redevelopment vision for this site includes over 50,000 square feet of mixed-use space. A comprehensive understanding of the contamination will allow redevelopment of the property to move forward.

In Homer, 7 Pine Street houses a 14,000-square foot vacant building steps away from Main Street and directly adjacent to the Tioughnioga River. A former textile mill, the site may be contaminated with PCBs, lead, VOCs and other chemicals typically used in textile operations. The property is near an elementary school, putting children at risk of exposure. Using the EPA Assessment funds as a catalyst, the Village of Homer hopes to redevelop the site to support housing needs, such as senior residences and market rate townhomes. There is also an opportunity to improve the entirety of the Pine Street corridor, better connecting Homer's downtown to the River.

1.a.iii. Identifying Additional Sites: Upon grant award, the IDA will establish a plan to identify additional sites in the event that grant funds remain once target areas have been addressed. The IDA will incorporate discussion of additional sites into community engagement events throughout the grant period. The IDA also intends to apply for a County-wide Brownfield Inventory grant through the NYS Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA) program in 2025, which will work in tandem with the EPA Assessment grant, providing a comprehensive list of vacant, underutilized and potential brownfield sites. Therefore, the IDA will have information to draw from for consideration of additional sites as the EPA grant progresses. Final prioritization and selection of additional sites will lie with the grant team, who will consider public recommendations, proximity to underserved areas, potential community benefits of redevelopment (e.g., services for underserved communities), avoidance of resident displacement, extent of potential contaminants, BOA and town/village/city planning recommendations, economic benefits of reuse options, and property owner commitment.

1.b. Revitalization of the Target Area

1.b.i. Reuse Strategy and Alignment with Revitalization Plans: Cortland County's Strategic Development Plan 2025-2030 (not yet finalized) emphasizes the need for quality housing as well as workforce/economic development. The plan, which has been drafted with extensive community engagement, promotes development of senior housing to help the County's older population age in place and encourages placemaking, recreational enhancements, and small business development to stimulate economic growth. It promotes sustainability and renewable energy through small-scale projects (e.g., wind, solar). This also reflects the City of Cortland's 2011 Comprehensive Plan, which highlights retaining and increasing business in City; creating more attractive housing, more housing choices and high-quality rentals; developing more efficient buildings; and the addition of more parks/recreational areas. Reuse strategies align with these plans, including the intent for mixed-use development on the former Parker School site, which would be a prime housing location for an aging population and would promote small businesses. The Apex Tools site has the potential to address housing needs, as well as provide space for industrial operations.

Redevelopment of brownfields in the Village of Homer aligns with the Village's 2010 Comprehensive Plan, 2023 NY Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) Strategic Investment Plan, and 2024 Tioughnioga River Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan. The three documents

emphasize increased access to the river through the creation of a Riverwalk, improving the aesthetics of the Village by removing blight, identifying and safely redeveloping brownfields and providing housing options for all incomes, ages and abilities, with opportunity for mixed use developments. The Pine Street site is located near the river, and is slated to be transformed into housing, with walkable connections to the proposed Riverwalk.

Micron, a global chip manufacturer, has announced a \$100 billion investment in CNY for a new facility just 40 miles north of Cortland County. This project, along with the region's recent federal designation as a technology hub, has the potential to significantly change its economic landscape. The IDA must position the County as an attractive location for the impending influx of new residents, supply chain facilities, and other new businesses that will result from the investment, which is echoed in the CNY Regional Economic Development Council's 2023 plan. EPA funds will be the catalyst to convert potentially contaminated brownfields into mixed use housing, parks and recreational areas, and to attract supply chain firms that will accompany Micron. It will create quality housing, encourage tourism and recreation, and bring in high-paying jobs for its residents, crucial to the County's economic future.

1.b.ii. Outcomes and Benefits of Reuse Strategy: Addressing brownfields and determining strategic reuse plans will bring a multitude of benefits to Cortland County. Micron is expected to bring over 8,000 jobs to the CNY region in the next decade. Having available sites for Micron-related businesses in Cortland County will provide hundreds of jobs for residents and bring industry back into the County. Plans to redevelop brownfield sites into diverse housing at priority sites, including senior residences, townhomes, and market rate homes, will provide hundreds of new units throughout the County for current and new residents of varying needs. Bringing more than 55 acres and thousands of square feet of vacant and unused sites back into active use will increase the tax base in the County, increasing the collective wealth of the community. The County's Strategic Development Plan, the City's BOA Nomination Study, and Homer's DRI Plan strongly recommend the use of renewable energy and green infrastructure in redevelopment, which will generate community sustainability and resiliency. Additionally, housing development often relies on NYS Homes and Community Renewal (HCR) funds, which recently adopted Sustainability Guidelines that include electrification of heating and hot water systems, 100% zero emissions electricity in new buildings, and new energy standards for existing buildings.¹

In Homer, reuse of brownfield sites will connect its downtown to the Tioughnioga River, providing recreation for visitors and residents, and promoting active behaviors such as walking and biking, leading to improved health outcomes. Identifying and addressing environmental contaminants will also result in improved health outcomes, as many of the suspected contaminants, such as VOCs and petroleum, are linked to cancers. Finally, brownfields across Cortland County are a source of blight that discourage community investment and contribute to negative perceptions of the area. Continuing work to address these issues will stimulate further investment.

There is no expectation of residential or business displacement through this project; however, any potential occurrences will be reviewed thoroughly by the grant team and will be discussed in public forums. Displacement strategies will be implemented on a case-by-case basis and will aim to minimize impacts on residents and businesses. Community feedback will be critical for these discussions, especially from those who may be directly impacted.

1.c. Strategy for Leveraging Resources

1.c.i. Resources Needed for Site Reuse: The City of Cortland is in the process of completing a BOA Designation through NYS (designation document is complete and currently awaiting state

¹ HCR Sustainability Guidelines. <https://hcr.ny.gov/sustainability-guidelines>

approval). The IDA intends to apply for a 2025 NYS BOA grant to conduct a county-wide brownfield inventory that will help identify additional priority sites. The IDA expects to use this EPA Assessment Grant to continue efforts in the brownfield program, both expanding its reach throughout the County and furthering projects in the City of Cortland, spurring economic activity and ensuring resident welfare. This EPA grant will also stimulate the availability of additional funds that complement brownfield work, including:

- **NYS BOA Program:** This program allows for inventories, delineation of target brownfield areas, and further planning and engineering analyses identified in exiting BOAs.
- **EPA Cleanup Grant:** The IDA and other municipal/non-profit entities can leverage assessments conducted under this grant to remediate sites to acceptable condition for reuse.
- **NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) Brownfield Cleanup Program (BCP):** Developers can obtain substantial tax credits and liability protection for the remediation and reuse of brownfield sites.
- **National Grid Brownfield Redevelopment Grants:** Developers are eligible for grants up to \$300,000 from National Grid to fund utility-related costs for the redevelopment of brownfields.
- **NYS HCR:** HCR has funding programs available for private developers and municipalities intended to develop and improve housing, mainly for low- and mid-income level families.
- **NYS Empire State Development (ESD):** Projects that will lead to job creation and direct investment are able to apply for competitive grants from ESD.
- **NY State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA):** NYSERDA funding is available to support renewable energy initiatives, including solar, geothermal and wind.
- **NYS Downtown Revitalization Initiative/NY Forward:** These planning and implementation programs provide funding for transformative site redevelopment.

1.c.ii. Use of Existing Infrastructure: There is existing infrastructure within the Target Areas such as gas, electric, municipal sewer and water, roads, internet access, and cellular service to support reuse. Several areas within the County and the County itself are committed to sustainable growth: Cortland County and the City of Cortland are registered as NYS Climate Smart Communities and the Village of Homer is a Bronze-certified NYS Climate Smart Community. Cortland County is also a NYS Clean Energy Community, as are several towns and villages.

2. COMMUNITY NEED AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

2.a. Community Need / 2.a.i. The Community's Need for Funding: The population of Cortland County is 45,752, with almost 40% of residents living in the City of Cortland. The rest of the population is spread throughout 15 townships, which are mainly small villages and rural areas. The County population has been in decline, with a loss of 7% of residents since 2010. Over 15% of County households live in poverty, compared to 11% in NYS. Cortland County's median household income is about \$10,000 lower than NYS, (\$65,029 compared to \$75,149).² Based on the decreasing population and low median income, the tax base to draw on for publicly funded initiatives is limited. Many brownfield sites are not on the tax rolls, causing an undue burden on municipal budgets. EPA grant funding will spur private and public redevelopment, making this initial federal investment crucial for sustained economic success in the community.

2.a.ii. Threats to Sensitive Populations

(1) Health or Welfare of Sensitive Populations: Cortland County is home to several vulnerable groups. There is a high percentage of low-income individuals in the County, with 15% living in poverty vs. 11% in NYS. This is concentrated in the City of Cortland, where 22% of all residents

² US Census Bureau, 2023 ACS 1-year estimates (most recent available for indicator).

and 19% of children under 18 are in poverty.³ The low-income population generally lacks the resources to relocate to avoid poor environmental conditions and often find themselves living near contaminated sites (e.g., the Rosen Superfund site) and in substandard housing conditions. In fact, according to Cortland County’s 2022-2024 Community Health Assessment and Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP), more than 25% of occupied housing units in the County have one or more substandard condition (e.g., lack complete plumbing, monthly costs exceed 30% of income, etc.). The median year homes were built in Cortland County ranges from 1939 to 1971.⁴ This means that a high number of homes in Cortland County may have lead paint, which can lead to several health effects, particularly in children, including lower IQ, developmental delays, and seizures. Children younger than 72 months in Cortland County have almost double the incidence of high blood lead levels (>5µg) than NYS (19.1/1,000 tested compared to 10.4/1,000 tested).⁵ Housing projects are a priority for several brownfield sites, including the Pine Street site in Homer and potentially the Apex Tools site in the City of Cortland, which will provide modern, safe homes without lead for families with children, lowering their risk of exposure.

According to the Climate and Economic Justice Screen Tool (CEJST), two census tracts in the City of Cortland are disadvantaged, with low income, high flood risk, and proximity to legacy pollution. Further, the County has a higher incidence of residents experiencing food insecurity than NYS, at 13% vs. 11%. Cortland County residents have less access to health care providers than NYS, particularly for dental, mental health, and primary care. Cleanup and redevelopment of sites will result in housing, as well as mixed-use buildings, which will bring in grocery and other food stores, helping to alleviate food deserts, and medical offices, which will improve access to care.

(2) Greater Than Normal Incidence of Disease and Adverse Health Conditions: While data that correlates health issues to specific brownfield sites is not available, the County has a high number of suspected contaminated sites and higher than average poor health outcomes related to diseases that may be linked to certain contaminants (see table below). For example, PCBs, VOCs, lead-based paint, and petroleum, which are known or suspected in several priority sites, are linked to respiratory illness and cancers, particularly lung and bronchus cancer. Compared to NYS, the City of Cortland has higher rates of asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) among adults,⁶ which may be related to contaminants like VOCs and SVOCs. Cortland County is ranked 32nd in the NYS (out of 62 counties) for percentage of premature births and has a low birth rate percentage slightly higher than NYS, which can be linked to PCBs and metals exposure.

Health Indicator	Cortland County	NYS
All cancers incidence rate	658/100,000	587/100,000
Lung and bronchus cancer incidence	93/100,00	70/100,000
Chronic lower respiratory disease deaths	56/100,000	33/100,000
<i>Data from NYS Community Health Indicator Reports Dashboard (NYS Department of Health)</i>		

With several sites that house potential environmental contaminants in Cortland County, many of these diseases could be attributed to poor environmental conditions. EPA funding will allow the County to take the first step of identifying the extent of contamination, leading to determination of the most appropriate remediation and reuse strategies that will lessen negative effects on residents’ health. For example, new housing will provide homes where families can live lead-free, decreasing child blood lead levels and premature births/low birth weights.

³ US Census Bureau, 2022 ACS 5-year estimates (most recent available for indicator).

⁴ Cortland County, NY Consolidated Housing Plan. 2017.

⁵ NYS Community Health Indicator Reports (NYS Department of Health). 2021.

⁶ CDC Local Data for Better Health. <https://www.cdc.gov/places/>

(3) Environmental Justice: Cortland County has a long history of environmental issues stemming from its past industrial operations. The County’s strong manufacturing sector sharply declined in the 1970s, leaving hundreds unemployed and dozens of buildings and sites with a slew of contamination in its wake. The community has struggled to recover from the decline for decades and has not had the means to fully tackle its brownfields. According to EPA’s EJScreen and CEJST, environmental justice areas in Cortland County are concentrated within the City of Cortland and the Village of Homer, which is where most of the industrial centers were situated. Portions of the City of Cortland are in the high percentiles (80th-95th) for exposure to lead paint, Superfund proximity (Rosen Brothers site), low life expectancy, incidence of asthma, living in a food desert, broadband gaps, and low-income areas. Areas in the Village of Homer are also in the high percentiles (80th-100th) for lead paint, Superfund proximity, and flood risk.

Environmental assessment and subsequent cleanup are desperately needed to address specific sites with lead paint and other contamination, as well as alleviate asthma incidence by removing air toxins for the County’s vulnerable populations. Reuse strategies being considered, such as developing mixed-use spaces to create food stores and new housing options, will address issues such as food deserts and lead paint exposure. Community involvement will be focused on areas suffering from environmental justice issues to ensure this project results in the most impactful solutions. This will include identifying additional sites, determining reuse strategies that will be most beneficial to the community, and minimizing displacement of residents and local businesses.

2.b. Community Engagement

2.b.i. Project Involvement & 2.b.ii. Project Roles: The IDA routinely works with local citizens, business groups and community organizations. The IDA will continue to foster these relationships as well as develop new partnerships for this grant. Many groups will have an active role, including:

Partner Name	Contact	Specific Role in the Project
NYS DEC	Karen Diligent, Director, Bureau of Program Management	Provide technical assistance regarding contaminated sites; review cleanup plans
Cortland County Planning Department	Trisha Jesset, P.E., Director of Planning, tjesset@cortland-co.org (607) 756-3404	Active partner in determining reuse options and identifying additional sites
Cortland County Health Department	Nicole Anjeski, Public Health Director, (607) 753-5036	Health monitoring, as needed
City of Cortland	Scott Steve, Mayor, mayor@cortland.org (607) 753-0872	Work with property owners, engaging the public, and determining reuse strategies in the City of Cortland
Village of Homer	Hal McCabe, Mayor. mayor@homerny.org (607) 749-3322	Work with property owners, engaging the public, and determining reuse strategies in the Village of Homer
Town of Cortlandville Planning Board	Bruce Weber, Planning/ Zoning Officer, (607) 756-7052	Active partner in working with property owners, engaging the public, and determining reuse strategies in the Town of Cortlandville
Cortland County Chamber of Commerce	Bob Haight, President & CEO, Bob@CortlandAreaChamber.com (607) 756-2814	Business advocacy organization, will assist with engaging local business, and reuse strategies
Rural Health Institute (based in Cortland)	Matt Whitman, Executive Director, (607) 299-4910	Non-profit focused on public health, will assist with public engagement

2.b.iii. Incorporating Community Input: Community input is crucial for all aspects of the IDA’s brownfield strategy. Public engagement will include:

- *Public Meetings:* Two public meetings per year will be held to gather community input on sites and reuse alternatives, as well as inform the community of progress. Meetings will be offered virtually and in-person, at locations like senior centers, schools, and libraries, and will be scheduled at varying times of the day to encourage participation. Towns and villages in the County will assist in scheduling and facilitating meetings specific to their municipality.
- *Webpage:* The IDA will work with its selected consultant to create and maintain a webpage for the project, intended to share project information, potential sites and reuse options, meeting information, a site nomination form for the public to recommend additional sites, and contact information for residents to provide feedback and suggestions. The IDA will monitor feedback, provide responses as warranted, and summarize comments monthly.
- *Press Releases:* The IDA will use local and regional news outlets (i.e., Syracuse.com) and the project website to keep the public informed on project progress and upcoming meetings, as well as ask for feedback and additional site suggestions.
- *Social Media:* Press releases and notifications of public meetings will be posted on various social media outlets such as municipalities’ Facebook and Instagram accounts.

Minutes will be recorded during all public engagement activities. Materials will be posted on the grant webpage. Five percent of the County’s residents speak a language other than English, including Spanish and other Indo-European languages.⁷ The County will plan for interpreters as needed at public events, including American Sign Language. All feedback gathered will be summarized on an ongoing basis and discussed at monthly project team meetings. The IDA and its team will incorporate all feedback as appropriate, with updates posted on the project webpage.

3. TASK DESCRIPTIONS, COST ESTIMATES, AND MEASURING PROGRESS

3.a. Description of Tasks/Activities and Outputs: The following table outlines the tasks (3.a.i), schedule (3.a.ii), responsible parties (3.a.iii), and outputs (3.iv) associated with the project. The IDA is proposing a 4-year work plan. Note that the need for health monitoring is not anticipated, but the IDA will work with the Cortland County Health Department if needed.

Task 1 – Project Management, Reporting, and Other Eligible Activities
i. Project Implementation: The IDA will manage all aspects of the project in accordance with the terms and conditions established in the Cooperative Agreement (CA) with EPA. At the IDA’s direction, the consultant will assist with compliance reporting and other eligible project activities. The IDA will facilitate monthly check-in meetings with the consultant and partners to ensure the project is progressing as planned. One IDA staff member will attend two national brownfields conferences.
ii. Anticipated Project Schedule: Activities will be ongoing throughout the 4-year project period.
iii. Task/Activity Lead(s): Cortland IDA, with support from consultant
iv. Output(s): 16 Quarterly Reports, 1 Final Report, 4 DBE Utilization Reports, 4 Federal Financial Reports, ACREs updates, 2 brownfield conferences attended by IDA personnel, and monthly meetings
Task 2 – Site Prioritization, Reuse Planning, and Community Outreach
i. Project Implementation: Community engagement includes establishing/maintaining a project webpage, holding public meetings, generating press releases and social media content, and summarizing/discussing feedback during monthly meetings. The IDA, with the consultant’s support, will review and prioritize sites nominated for grant funding based on site prioritization criteria.
ii. Anticipated Project Schedule: The project webpage will be established in Q1. Community outreach will occur 2 times per year throughout the 4-year project. Site prioritization will begin in Q1 and is expected to be revised and adapted throughout the grant period.

⁷ US Census Bureau, 2022 ACS 5-year estimates (most recent available for indicator).

iii. Task/Activity Lead(s): The IDA will lead outreach to residents and site prioritization, with support from the consultant and project partners (e.g., local municipalities).
iv. Output(s): Project webpage, 8 community engagement activities, summaries of public feedback, list of all sites nominated/approved for funding
Task 3 – Phase I/II ESAs, Cleanup/Reuse Planning
i. Project Implementation: The IDA estimates 18 sites will be assessed. The consultant will prepare Eligibility Determination (ED) requests for prioritized sites and will conduct Phase I ESAs for ~18 sites in accordance with the AAI Final Rule and the ASTM E1527-21 and E1527-13 Phase I ESA Process. The consultant will complete Phase II ESAs for ~6 sites. Prior to field investigation, the consultant will prepare a Master Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) for EPA approval, Sampling and Analysis Plans (SAPs) and Health and Safety Plans (HASPs) for each site selected for a Phase II ESA, ~4 Cleanup Plans and ~4 Site Reuse Plans.
ii. Anticipated Project Schedule: The IDA anticipates that the consultant will complete the following: <i>Year 1:</i> Master QAPP, 5 Phase I ESAs, 1 Phase II ESA/SAP; <i>Year 2:</i> 6 Phase I ESAs, 3 Phase II ESAs/SAPs, 1 Cleanup Plan; <i>Year 3:</i> 4 Phase I ESAs, 1 Phase II ESAs/SAPs; 2 Cleanup Plans, 2 Reuse Plan, <i>Year 4:</i> 3 Phase I ESAs, 1 Phase II ESAs/SAP, 1 Cleanup Plans, 2 Reuse Plans
iii. Task/Activity Lead(s): The consultant will lead technical activities at the direction of the IDA.
iv. Output(s): 18 ED requests; 1 Master QAPP; 18 Phase I ESAs; 6 Phase II ESAs/SAPs, 4 Cleanup Plans, 4 Reuse Plans

3.b. Cost Estimates: The IDA is requesting \$500,000 to complete this 4-year assessment project. The table below provides a breakdown of estimated costs by task. An average rate of \$175/hour was used for contractual services. The IDA will not use grant funds for personnel/fringe costs to administer the grant and will contribute their own resources to manage the activities.

Task 1 – Project Management, Reporting, and Other Eligible Activities: \$25,000	
Travel Total: \$2,900 2027 National Brownfields Conference: \$1,400 (\$1,400/person x 1 person) 2029 National Brownfields Conference: \$1,500 (\$1,500/person x 1 person)	
Contractual Total: \$21,700 48 monthly check-in meetings: \$8,400 (48 hours x \$175/hr) Compliance Reporting: \$13,300 (76 hours x \$175/hr)	
Other Total: \$400 Conference Registration Fees: \$400 (\$200 x 2 conferences)	
Task 2 – Site Prioritization, Reuse Planning, and Community Outreach: \$16,450	
Contractual Total: \$16,450 Community engagement support: \$2,800 (8 events x 2 hours x \$175/hr) Webpage development/maintenance support: \$4,200 (24 hrs x \$175/hr) Site prioritization support: \$9,450 (54 hours x \$175/hr)	
Task 3 – Phase I/II ESAs, Cleanup/Reuse Planning: \$458,550	
Contractual Total: \$458,550 Master QAPP development: \$7,550 Phase I ESAs: \$108,000 (18 sites x \$6,000/site) Phase II ESAs: \$240,000 (6 sites x \$40,000/site)	SAPs: \$15,000 (6 sites x \$2,500/site) Cleanup Plans: \$40,000 (4 sites x \$10,000/site) Reuse Plans: \$48,000 (4 sites x \$12,000/site)

A summary of the proposed budget is provided below:

Budget Categories	Task 1 Project Management	Task 2 Outreach and Planning	Task 3 Assessments and Plan	Total
Travel	\$2,900	\$0	\$0	\$2,900
Contractual	\$21,700	\$16,450	\$458,550	\$496,700
Other	\$400	\$0	\$0	\$400
Total	\$25,000	\$16,450	\$458,550	\$500,000

3.c. Measuring Environmental Results: The IDA expects to finalize a prioritized list of assessment sites, as well as complete a Master QAPP, 18 Phase I ESAs, 6 Phase II ESAs/SAPs, 4 Cleanup Plans, and 4 Reuse Plans. The amount of budget utilized, timeline of the project, and the number of community members reached will be tracked and recorded on a biweekly basis by the Project Manager, Brendan O’Bryan. He and the consultant will track metrics and outcomes using a shared system, like Google Docs, as well as the EPA’s ACRES system. Mr. O’Bryan will lead monthly conference calls with team members to ensure all components are accomplished. Outcomes will include assessment results on over 55 acres of land, the protection of human health by minimizing exposure to hazardous substances, and a strong community consensus on reuse goals following outreach. Should the project deviate from its expected schedule or financial track, the IDA will work with the EPA and consultant to create a corrective measures plan that outlines specific spending and timeline goals, and may result in a revised workplan.

4. PROGRAMMATIC CAPABILITY AND PAST PERFORMANCE

4.a. Programmatic Capability

4.a.i. Organizational Capacity, 4.a.ii. Organizational Structure & 4.a.iii. Description of Key Staff: The IDA consists of a three-person staff and is governed by a seven-person Board of Directors, who will provide high-level approval and fiduciary authority for the grant project. The IDA has spearheaded economic development projects within Cortland County since its inception in 1974. The IDA also coordinates incentives for large scale projects such as at the former Smith Corona building, which resulted in the retention of 190 positions and the creation of 25 new jobs.

Brendan O’Bryan, Executive Director, will serve as the Project Manager of the EPA grant, overseeing its administration and communicating regularly with the selected consultant and the EPA. Brendan has decades of experience in economic and community development and has secured and successfully managed federal and state grant awards. Before joining the Cortland County IDA, Brendan was the leading official at the Broome County IDA/LDC, in southern NYS where he spearheaded the application and award of two NYS DRI grants, bringing in millions of dollars to local communities.

4.a.iv. Acquiring Additional Resources: When additional expertise is required during the assessment, the IDA will use a competitive procurement process, consistent with 40 CFR 31.36, to select a contractor/consultant to assist or complete other necessary activities.

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: The IDA has not received an EPA Brownfields Grant in the past but has successfully managed state and federal grants similar in size, scope and relevance.

(1) Purpose and Accomplishments: The following grants helped to fund the development of the 127-acre Finger Lakes East Business Park.

- \$2 million Public Works and Development Facilities Grant from US Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration
- \$433,000 EPA Appropriations Act Grant
- \$500,000 NYS Economic Development Infrastructure Improvement Program Grant

The project entailed water/sewer extension and road construction. Its successful completion resulted in the purchase of the site by Byrne Dairy, a local dairy processor, and a \$30 million expansion of its yogurt plant that created 78 new jobs.

(2) Compliance with Grant Requirements: For each grant listed, all timelines were met, reporting deliverables were completed and there were no adverse findings.

Threshold Criteria

- 1. Applicant Eligibility:** Cortland County Industrial Development Agency (IDA) is eligible to apply for this assessment grant as a public benefit corporation of the State of New York, created by the Cortland County Legislature pursuant to Chapter 77 of the 1974 Laws of New York. As a public authority, the Cortland County IDA has the powers and duties conferred by Article 18-A of the New York General Municipal Law. The enabling statute for the Cortland County IDA is attached.

- 2. Community Involvement:** Community input is crucial for all aspects of the IDA's brownfield strategy. Public engagement will include:
 - *Public Meetings:* Two public meetings per year will be held to gather community input on reuse alternatives and sites, as well as inform the community of reuse planning progress. Meetings will be offered virtually and in-person, at locations like senior centers, schools and libraries, and will be scheduled at varying times of the day to encourage participation. Towns and villages in the County will assist in scheduling and facilitating meetings specific to their municipality.
 - *Webpage:* The IDA will work with its selected consultant to create and maintain a web page for the project, intended to share project information, potential sites and reuse options, meeting information, a site nomination form for the public to recommend additional sites, and contact information for residents to provide feedback and suggestions. The IDA will monitor feedback, provide responses as warranted and summarize comments monthly.
 - *Press Releases:* The IDA will use local and regional news outlets (i.e., Syracuse.com) and the project website to keep the public informed on project progress and upcoming meetings, as well as ask for feedback and additional site suggestions.
 - *Social Media:* Press releases and notifications of public meetings will be posted on various social media outlets such as municipalities' Facebook and Instagram accounts. Minutes will be recorded during all public engagement activities. Materials will be posted on the grant webpage. Five percent of the County's residents speak a language other than English, including Spanish and other Indo-European languages.¹ The County will plan for interpreters as needed at public events, including American Sign Language. All feedback gathered will be summarized on an ongoing basis and discussed at monthly project team meetings. The IDA and its team will incorporate all feedback as appropriate, with updates posted on the project webpage.

- 3. Expenditure of Existing Grant Funds:** Cortland County IDA does not currently have an open EPA Brownfields Assessment or Multipurpose grant.

- 4. Contractors and Named Subrecipients:** On September 19, 2024, Cortland County IDA released a Request for Proposals (RFP) entitled *Application and Implementation Services, EPA Brownfield Assessment Grant* (attached) to solicit firms for assistance with EPA grant preparation and environmental services to be conducted with grant funds upon award. The RFP was posted on the IDA website and sent to the NYS Economic Development Council, who posted it on their website and included it on their weekly email blast. The RFP was

¹ US Census Bureau, 2022 ACS 5-year estimates (most recent available for indicator).

posted for 15 days and proposals were accepted until October 4, 2024. Bids were evaluated based on the following criteria:

- a. Successful track record in obtaining grant funding
- b. Expertise related to relevant project components
- c. Firm and staff experience related to brownfields assessment, cleanup and redevelopment planning
- d. Project approach
- e. Ability to facilitate public outreach activities
- f. Demonstrated ability to provide comprehensive and innovative environmental services
- g. Cost

Four proposals were received and considered. After review and evaluation, Cortland County IDA selected C&S Engineers, Inc. based in Syracuse, NY, to assist with grant application preparation and implementation of environmental assessment, remedial planning, community outreach and other environmental or planning components of the EPA Brownfield Assessment Grant (award letter attached). The contract has not yet been signed but will be prior to grant award.