

1. COMMUNITY NEED

Background

Location: The Town of Framingham lies twenty miles due west of Boston in the MetroWest region of Massachusetts. MetroWest, which consists of ten communities located in the arc between I-95 and I-495, is predominantly comprised of small suburban cities and towns that have historically served as bedroom communities for Boston's professional workforce. As employers have been increasingly drawn to its relative affordability and excellent highway access, MetroWest has become a node for high-end office park development thus driving up land values and housing costs.

Framingham has benefited to some degree from the region's growth. The property values in the northern, historically agricultural part of town have increased substantially. However, Framingham's south side, the heart of the town's industrial legacy, has not kept pace. Two adjacent neighborhoods on the south side, downtown and southeast Framingham, have been identified as our target area for this grant and our brownfields project in general because they have largely been left out of the region's economic growth and because they are home to Framingham's most vulnerable populations.

Economic Overview: Starting in the mid-1980s, the declining industrial interests in downtown, combined with the growth of malls in other parts of the community led to disinvestment in the target area. Housing originally built for workers is now home to a large low-income and immigrant population, while former industrial sites lie empty or underutilized. The 2nd floors of downtown buildings are predominantly vacant and the 1st floors house a large number of social services and stores that cater almost exclusively to the immigrant population.

Population: Low-income families and individuals, including the majority of Framingham's immigrant and minority populations, which have been growing rapidly over the last ten years, are concentrated in downtown and southeast Framingham. These neighborhoods are home to three US Census tracts that meet all four of the Environmental Justice (EJ) criteria (Census Tracts: 383100.02, 383400.03 and 383100.04; EJ Criterion met: Income, English Proficiency, Minority Population and Foreign Born) and six more census tracts that meet at least one criteria. It should be noted that only 4.8% of the land area in the entire state can be classified under the EJ heading. Thus, these two Framingham neighborhoods epitomize the inequitable distribution of the town's environmental contamination.

The table on the next page illustrates the demographic composition of our target area. The median income in the target area is just 42% of the average regional median income, and roughly 70% of Framingham's median income. The percentages of minority, Hispanic and Latino populations are dramatically higher than regional percentages. The percentage of linguistically isolated households in the target area is 18.5%--over four times higher than that of the region. The largest segments of the town's linguistically isolated households (12.3% of total) speak Indo-European languages, a reflection of Framingham's large Brazilian community.

Demographics: MetroBoston DataCommon¹ statistics indicate that between 1990 and 2000 the population of Framingham remained fairly level, growing by only 3% overall. During the same time period, the population of African Americans in Framingham grew by 41% and the populations of Asians, Latinos and other minorities grew by 87%, 37%, and 108% respectively. At the same time, the population of children between 5-9 years old and the population of elderly adults between 75-84 years old each grew by over 20%, while the population of adults aged 20-24 years old declined by 29% and the population of 25-34 year olds declined by 11%. Framingham is steadily losing a critical segment of its population while simultaneously being stretched to provide increased services for vulnerable age groups that add significantly to its cultural identity, but little to the economy. While these statistics reflect town-wide growth, a closer look at the 2000 US Census data for the tracts comprising southern Framingham indicates

¹ MetroBoston DataCommon is an online tool providing data available about the region and each of its cities and towns. The tool compiles US Census data and data from other state and federal agencies: <http://metrobostondatacommon.org>.

that the vast majority of these changes have occurred within our target area, especially the growth in minority, zero-vehicle households and low-income populations.

Area	Population in 2000	Median Household Income	% Foreign-Born	% of Minority	% Hispanic and Latino	% Linguistically Isolated Households ^c
MetroWest	240,614	\$91,761	13.75%	11.83%	5.00%	4.3%
Framingham	66,910	\$54,288	21.15%	20.23%	10.86%	8.7%
Target Area ^a	23,240	\$39,082 ^b	27.45%	32.86%	24.46%	18.5%

^aDefined as the 14 block groups that comprise downtown and southeast Framingham

^bCalculated as the average of the median incomes for the 12 block groups in downtown and southeast Framingham.

^cA **linguistically isolated household** is one in which no member 14 years old and over (1) speaks only English or (2) speaks a non-English language and speaks English "very well." In other words, all members 14 years old and over have at least some difficulty with English.

The rapidly changing demographics are also reflected in the economic characteristics of the target area. Despite Framingham's high median income of \$54,288 in 2000, 24,674 individuals in Framingham were low-to-moderate income according to HUD. This is an increase of 47% since 1990. The proportion of low-to-moderate income individuals grew from 28% in 1990 to 39% in 2000. In 2000, over 1,000 families (6%) were below the poverty level.² This is an increase since 1990 when there were 568 Framingham families below the poverty level. Another indicator of economic activity is the number of Framingham residents in the labor force. In 2000, the US Census counted 37,059 residents in the labor force, a reduction of 5.5% from the 1990 US Census. Meanwhile the State's labor force grew by 1.7% between 1990 and 2000. Framingham's economic decline can also be seen in the number of jobs within the town. According to the MA Division of Career Services, there were 45,646 jobs in Framingham in 2007, a slight drop from the 45,749 jobs that existed in 2001. The modest decline in the number of jobs is indicative of a stagnant local economy.

Representation: The geographic neighborhoods of downtown and southeast Framingham, and the minority and immigrant populations that reside there, are the most poorly represented groups in Town government. Framingham is divided into 18 precincts of equal population; each precinct has 12 seats in Town Meeting, the Town's legislative body. Four of the seven precincts located in the target area, have a significant number of vacant seats in Town Meeting (19 vacancies out of 48 seats). These vacancies mean that the diversity of the area is not fully represented in Town Meeting and diminish Town Meeting's capacity for outreach and communication, and capacity to respond to local needs.

1.a. Health, Welfare, and Environment

1.a.i. Number, Size and Impacts of Brownfields

Industrial History: The first industries in Framingham produced textiles and concentrated around the Saxonville area in the northeast section of town. Later, spurred by construction of the railroad lines, major industries grew in the downtown area including a paper manufacturer, and several automobile and related industries. It is this automotive legacy that this Petroleum Assessment Grant funding will target. Petroleum additives such as BTEX and MTBE³ are the major cause of harmful contamination on petroleum-related brownfields sites.

Extent: MassDEP maintains an inventory of contaminated sites in the state that contains information on reported incidents of waste releases since the early 1980s. According to the latest DEP inventory, there are currently 458 entries for Framingham. Of those, approximately 60% are reported as oil contamination and over 1/3 of those are located in the target area. In addition, there are 189 parcels in the Town's GIS database that are labeled with the State Use Code⁴ of 330 to 338, which includes "Retail Trade:

² US Census.

³ benzene, toluene, ethyl-benzene, and xylenes (collectively 'BTEX') & Methyl tert-butyl ether ('MTBE')

⁴ State of Mass. Property Type classification codes (Rev. June 2008): www.mass.gov/Ador/docs/dls/bla/classificationcodebook.pdf

Automotive, Marine Craft and Other Engine Propelled Vehicles Sales and Service.” As expected, they are concentrated in the southern half of the town, particularly southeast Framingham. Many of these sites are smaller commercial parcels and some are vacant or underutilized because there are suspected in-ground tanks and questions about potential contamination that smaller businesses or manufacturers cannot afford to address. As part of the Town’s current brownfields grant, the Community and Economic Development Division (C&ED) is working with a Licensed Site Professional (LSP)⁵ to create a comprehensive inventory that will help quantify the issue and aid us in tracking our progress through both grants.

1.a.ii. Health and Welfare of Sensitive Populations

Health and Welfare: According to the Mass. Department of Public Health (DPH), when compared statewide, Framingham’s 2000 population suffered from higher rates of asthma, bacterial pneumonia, and cardio-vascular disease. Framingham also had higher rates of babies born with low birth-weight, born to adolescent mothers, and to mothers receiving publically funded prenatal care. Finally, Framingham’s rate of individuals admitted into DPH substance abuse treatment programs was higher than state rates.

Public Health Statistics⁶

	Framingham	Statewide
Asthma Rate	156/100,000	140/100,000.
Bacterial Pneumonia Rate	351/100,000	337/100,000
Cardiovascular disease deaths	236/100,000	218/100,000
Low birth-weight	9.0/1,000	7.9/1,000
Births to adolescent mothers	6.7/1,000	6.2/1,000
Mothers receiving publically funded prenatal care	41.4/1,000	34.2/1,000
Substance-abuse admissions into DPH treatment programs	2,059/100,000	1,563/100,000

The Framingham Health Department provided anecdotal evidence that health screenings in southern Framingham, whether on-site or mobile, have a much higher rate of attendance than any other area in town. Also, screenings have identified higher incidences of hypertension, hearing and vision problems, poor nutrition and asthma. And, while the northern, rural portion of town has a higher rate of Lyme disease, residents in the target area have more incidents of advanced Lyme disease due to delays in seeking medical treatment.

A portion of the grant target area, census tract 3831, is a federally designated medically underserved area (MUA). Medical conditions, such as those cited above are known to be exacerbated by poor environmental conditions. Phase I and II Assessments will identify existing contamination in the target area and the outreach and community education associated with the assessments will help disseminate this information relative to suspected brownfields. Education is an important outcome, but more importantly, the assessments will open the door for clean-up and redevelopment, ultimately removing some of the environmental conditions that have led to these alarming statistics.

Environmental: The target area is home to numerous wetland resources protected by state and municipal law, including Beaver Dam Brook, Course Brook, Waushakum Pond, Farm Pond, and numerous smaller intermittent and seasonal streams that feed into the area’s brooks and wetlands. In the target area, which has a total area of roughly 3,700 acres, there are approximately 600 acres of wetlands. Approximately 400 individual parcels in the target area are directly adjacent to a water body, and 460 parcels contain some wetland. There is evidence that contamination on known sites is migrating into wetlands areas. The assessments conducted through this project will help the Town determine the extent of the problem so that we can formulate a plan to protect the Town’s valuable wetlands resources from further damage, and, as a result of the private investment generated by the assessment work, begin to remediate existing contamination.

⁵ See 2.a. *Project Description* and 3.b. *Local, State and Tribal Partnerships* for more about the LSP role.

⁶ Source: Massachusetts Department of Public Health, a division of the Executive Office of Health and Human Services.

1.b. Financial Need

1.b.i. Economic Impact of Brownfields

The majority of sites with known contamination are located in southeast Framingham. Southeast Framingham was historically used for industrial and manufacturing purposes, and is where much of Framingham's most intensive land use still exists. As with much of New England, Framingham has lost manufacturing jobs and the role of manufacturing in the economy is changing. While it still represents a significant source of jobs (about 11% of 37,000 total), Framingham's manufacturing sector is in decline, going from 14,888 manufacturing jobs in 1985 to just over 4,100⁷ manufacturing jobs today. In addition, a portion of the target area, census tract 3831, is eligible for two geographically targeted economic development incentive programs, the U.S. Small Business Administration's HUB Zone Program and MassDevelopment's New Markets Loan Fund. While access to rail lines made southeast Framingham suitable for industrial use, newer industries rely on good highway access for trucks, which will limit new industry in southeast Framingham. However, there are indications that demand for new commercial and residential uses in town increased over the past few years. Currently, roughly 675 acres (over 1/3) of all manufacturing-zoned land in Framingham contains uses classified as commercial and residential.

In addition to the decline in manufacturing jobs, more recent economic trends have hit Framingham extremely hard. Data from October 2007 to March 2008 indicate that Framingham's foreclosure rate ranked 13th⁸ out of the 351 communities in Massachusetts. As of September 2008, *The Warren Group* listed 331 properties undergoing foreclosure action since the first of the year. The Town's Building Department has been tracking these properties and has found a large concentration of them in southeast Framingham, threatening to further destabilize an area that is already disadvantaged and creates further disincentives for investment.

Framingham has taken some proactive steps to improve its local economy, most significantly through a series of zoning amendments in recent years. In 1999 Town Meeting created the Central Business (CB) mixed-use zone in the downtown and in April 2008 it passed zoning amendments that target the Technology Park zoning district along the Town's western boundary. This area is home to several large corporate headquarters including Bose Corporation, Lifeline, Perini, Natural Microsystems, TJX and Staples. The zoning amendments relaxed the dimensional requirements for this district to allow for taller buildings and an increased floor area ratio for research and development uses. Additional zoning amendments will be needed to address the former manufacturing areas of southeast Framingham in order to stimulate reclamation of contaminated properties through brownfield remediation efforts, getting underutilized properties back on the tax rolls, and creating jobs.

Redevelopment of southeast Framingham requires two key strategies—understanding the extent of contamination and examining rezoning to encourage a more compatible and sustainable mix of land uses. This EPA Assessment Grant is a critical tool for the Town to address both. Many sites in southeast Framingham lie underutilized or vacant, in part because owners are afraid of the unknown costs of uncovering contamination, stalling redevelopment efforts. The Town does not have the information needed to determine reuse options, engage residents and property owners in a dialogue regarding redevelopment, and begin analyzing various zoning mechanisms to promote revitalization. The existence of contaminated land in areas where new uses are encroaching, particularly residential uses, and in the section of Town occupied increasingly by new immigrants and minority populations, points to a critical need to formulate a strategy for clean up, reuse, and area revitalization.

1.b.ii. Additional Financial Factors

Over the past ten years, Framingham has been marshalling resources towards economic development and revitalization, but several factors contribute to continued need for external fiscal support. Located in the political no-man's land between Boston and Worcester, Framingham is continually fighting for recognition

⁷ 2000 US Census data from *The Housing Plan for Framingham 2007*

⁸ Source: Foreclosures – www.forclosuresmass.com

and funding at the state level, despite a significant low- and moderate-income population and a tax base that is limited by a large number of non-profit and governmental land uses. As a result of the federal funding formulas, which weight things like age of housing stock, Framingham as a newer community is not eligible for the same level of community development (CDBG) funding as some of its “city” issues would appear to warrant. At the same time, Framingham’s portion of the region’s foreclosed homes is quite high and plans are being developed to use CDBG and Neighborhood Stabilization funds to address the issue and try to stabilize some of the hardest hit neighborhoods. On October 14, 2008, the Board of Selectmen reviewed and approved a plan for local intervention in the foreclosure crisis. The plan recommends tackling the problem on three fronts: prevention, property management, and neighborhood stabilization. This aggressive effort, in tandem with additional brownfields funds, will help return these neighborhoods to more productive use.

In April 2008, the Town received its first EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant for Hazardous Substances. As work has progressed under that grant, it has become apparent that there are a number of potential petroleum-only sites where the hazardous substances grant is limited but an assessment could help kick-start a redevelopment process. As noted above, the MassDEP website indicates over 455 incidents of hazardous substances released in Framingham and of those almost 60% list “oil” as the chemical type. While many of these may be simple roadside oil spills, a number are on sites that have redevelopment potential but are former gas stations or other industrial parcels.

In addition to this convergence of activities in southeast Framingham, the Town is currently working on a comprehensive Master Plan and a Downtown Revitalization Strategy, both of which will help identify areas of greatest potential for redevelopment. Assessment grant funding will inform that process as the two projects progress in tandem. The Master Plan process will also inform the reuse planning for specific sites that are assessed.

2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION & FEASIBILITY OF SUCCESS

2.a. Project Description

The Town of Framingham’s Brownfields project is administered by the Division of Community and Economic Development (C&ED). If awarded, this grant will run parallel to the 2008-2011 EPA Hazardous Substances Grant that we received, thereby allowing us to leverage that funding by coordinating tasks such as inventory and outreach and avoiding duplication of effort. It also directly complements other ongoing C&ED activities such as outreach and coordination on home foreclosures, building relationships with the business and development communities, and working on town-wide activities including a Master Plan for the Town. A Brownfields Advisory Committee (BAC) was established in the Fall of 2008 to work with C&ED staff on the brownfields project. The BAC members serve as advisors, community liaisons, and overseers of brownfields inventory, assessment and redevelopment work.

Previous work: As part of our economic development efforts and to lay the groundwork for the first EPA Brownfields application, C&ED conducted some limited inventory work. Under the current grant, outreach on brownfields has also begun, including one community forum, engagement of the community partners and the update of the brownfields website. The RFP for an LSP has been advertised with responses due November 14, 2008, interviews December 2, 2008, and consultant selection by December 12, 2008. The Town’s financial system has been integrated with the EPA’s grant reimbursement program. C&ED staff received ACRES training on November 13th and our first quarterly report is due to EPA in January 2009.

Inventory: The first activity funded by the current EPA Hazardous Substances Assessment grant is to hire an environmental consultant to develop a comprehensive inventory of brownfields sites located in the target area as a basis for that and future grants. This inventory will be reviewed and updated as necessary under the Petroleum Assessment Grant.

After site eligibility under the proposed grant has been determined by C&ED staff and the BAC, and confirmed with the input from the DEP and EPA Region I staff, the group will use input from a series of community forums (discussed in Section 3. Community Engagement Plan) to identify community issues, goals and priorities. The BAC will use this input in combination with the interdisciplinary expertise of its members to develop and weigh site selection criteria, which may include:

- **Economic Development:** potential job creation/retention; tax base expansion
- **Smart Growth/TOD potential:** Proximity to existing transit; potential for mixed-use development
- **Sustainable green space/public place creation:** development of new open spaces for recreation; creation of natural green space/habitat protection areas; creation of attractive, walkable streetscape
- **Development feasibility:** Site marketability; developer interest
- **Local neighborhood benefits:** Visual improvements to neighborhood; potential for job creation for residents; neighborhood support
- **Health impacts/Pollution prevention:** Potential to positively impact health; protection of natural water and wetland resources

Phase I: The bulk of the funding for the proposed Petroleum Assessment Grant will fund actual assessment work by an LSP. For Phase I, the consultant will work with staff and the BAC to apply the site selection criteria noted above to the most promising inventory sites and select up to 12 sites from the inventory for Phase I assessment.⁹ Once each site is approved as an eligible petroleum contamination site by Mass DEP and EPA, Phase I assessments will begin. The assessments will evaluate the potential environmental conditions and the risks posed to: neighboring residents or employees, soil and groundwater, wastewater and storm water, and air quality; and or for future spills or leaks. Public outreach at this stage will include preliminary discussions of long-term reuse potential. We anticipate that all assessments will be conducted within the target area; however, if we are unable to access identified sites, we may seek to include a limited number of sites in other neighborhoods that have historic industrial centers with redevelopment potential.

Phase II: Using information from Phase I, the BAC will reapply their site selection criteria to identify up to 6 sites on which to conduct Phase II Assessments. After the more rigorous Phase II Assessments have been conducted, the resulting information will be used to do the initial clean-up and reuse planning.

While there are a small number of municipally owned and/or tax-title parcels that may be investigated, the majority of sites identified for Phase II assessment will be privately-owned. Property owner participation will be essential both for the assessment and the ultimate redevelopment of brownfields so C&ED staff—as part of the emphasis on communication, education, and an inclusive decision-making process—will work closely with property owners to eliminate barriers to site access. Written approval for site access will be requested from each property owner prior to any Phase II work. C&ED staff and the selected LSP will work directly with property owners throughout the process to address any concerns. If approval is not ultimately granted, other sites from the Phase I pool will be investigated.

Reuse Planning/Redevelopment: Beginning with site selection and the Phase I assessments, internal and outreach discussions will include ideas and implications for the ultimate reuse of each site. This will ensure that the assessment and site preparation work is in line with site, target area, and town-wide goals, as well as provide those involved, especially abutters, with a vision for the end goal throughout the process.

⁹ All Phase I and Phase II work will be conducted by a Licensed Site Professional in accordance with Massachusetts Law Chapter 21e and with the Massachusetts Contingency Plan, the state laws and regulations governing the assessment and clean-up of brownfields.

2.b. Budget for EPA Funding and Leveraging Other Resources

2.b.i. Budget Table and Detailed Task Descriptions

Budget Categories	Task 1: Cooperative Agreement Oversight & Prog. Development	Task 2: Inventory/Phase I Assessments	Task 3: Phase II Assessment/ Reuse Planning	Task 4: Public Outreach	TOTAL
Personnel					\$0
Fringe					\$0
Travel	\$4,500				\$4,500
Equipment					\$0
Supplies	\$500			\$1,000	\$1,500
Contractual		\$50,000	\$132,000	\$10,000	\$192,000
Other				\$2,000	\$2,000
TOTAL:	\$5,000	\$50,000	\$132,000	\$13,000	\$200,000

Task 1: Cooperative Agreement Oversight & Program Development: A portion of the grant will be used to send Community and Economic Development (C&ED) staff members to conferences during the grant period, including the annual Brownfields National Conference and other conferences relevant to brownfields redevelopment. The \$4,500 in the travel line will cover Travel expenses for two staff members to attend two, two-day conferences (\$500 for registrations, \$2400 for airfare; \$1600 for lodging and transportation). In addition, \$500 in the “supplies” category has been allocated to purchase materials relating to brownfields redevelopment to build C&ED’s resource library. These activities total \$5,000 or 3% of the total budget. Town staff will provide significant in-kind contributions to this Assessment project. The C&ED Assistant Director serves as the Project Manager and will contribute approximately 20% of his time to the project, and one senior planner will devote 15% of her time. The C&ED Director will provide ongoing oversight and one administrative assistant will provide administrative support as needed (see section 2.b.ii. for more information). Wherever possible, the team will combine administrative tasks for the two grants to avoid unnecessary duplication of work.

Outputs include: quarterly reports to EPA, updates to the Town’s brownfields website, enhanced staff capacity/expertise in brownfields, and presentations to Town Boards and Committees, including the Board of Selectmen.

Task 2: Inventory/Phase I: The grant will provide funding to hire an environmental engineering firm to conduct inventory work and up to 12 ASTM Phase I Environmental Site Assessments (ESA) at \$4,000 each totaling \$48,000. \$2,000 of the Task 2 budget will fund an update to the inventory work completed under the current grant, if necessary. These activities total \$50,000 or 25% of the total budget. Upon completion of the inventory, an LSP, in accordance with Massachusetts law, will conduct the assessments on properties selected by C&ED staff and the BAC and approved by MassDEP and the Region I EPA staff. Information generated from the Phase I assessments will be added to the EPA’s ACRES database.

Outputs include: inventory update; up to 12 Phase 1 Site Assessments; 2 general public forums; 1 neighborhood forum; updates to Town brownfields website; and site information added in ACRES.

Task 3: Phase II/Reuse Planning: An LSP will conduct up to 6 Phase II ESAs estimated at \$22,000 each including consultant participation in re-use planning activities. This totals \$132,000 or 66% of the project budget. The grant will include planning activities to develop reuse goals for each site, which will provide the foundation for clean-up plans executed in future phases of work. The potential to use Phase II funds to conduct clean-up activities is attractive to the Town and will be leveraged to achieve our community vision for the southern part of Framingham.

Outputs include: up to 6 Phase II Assessments; 1 general public forum; 1 neighborhood forum; 1 visioning charrette, site reuse and clean-up plans; some limited clean-up activities if possible; updates to Town website and to site information in ACRES.

Task 4: Public Outreach: The grant will fund implementation of the public outreach plan described in Section 3.a., including advertising, consultant time, translation services, postage, production of site maps and other printed materials. The consultant will, with the assistance of Town staff, extensively market the workshops to ensure participation from affected communities; the \$10,000 will cover the consultant's time as well as the marketing materials that they will develop and distribute. The \$2,000 in the "Other" category will fund ads in local papers to alert residents to the public workshops. The \$1,000 for supplies will cover markers, paper, and printed maps for the public meetings. This represents \$13,000 or 7% of the total budget. Due to the anticipated overlap of the FY09 grant with our FY08 grant, less funding has been budgeted for Travel in Task 1 and for outreach in Task 4. Our experience to date with public outreach – postcards rather than letters, and less than expected advertising costs in local newspapers—has reduced our "Contractual" and "Other" estimate in Task 4. Tasks 2 & 3 have been increased accordingly.

Outputs include: 3 general public forums; 2 neighborhood forums; one visioning charrette (6 public meetings total), frequent Town website updates; and brownfields brochures and other educational materials.

2.b.ii. Leveraging of Additional Resources

In addition to the \$200,000 Petroleum Assessment Grant to cover inventory update work, up to 12 Phase I and up to 6 Phase II Assessments, the public outreach campaign, and basic administrative activities, the Town can also contribute the following resources, should additional funding be required:

- The Town estimates it will commit approximately \$70,000 in staff time to this project over the 3-year grant period. This estimate is reached by multiplying the salaries of key personnel involved by amount of time expected to be required for project implementation and grant management in the 3-year project term. Staff will continue to provide in-kind services to meet this project's assessment needs. Staff overhead, including health insurance, is expressly not included in the calculation.
- Framingham is designated by the state as an Economically Distressed Area, making it eligible to obtain site assessment assistance from the Massachusetts Brownfields Redevelopment Fund.
- The Town has adopted the Municipal Tax Abatement Program (Town Bylaw Article V, Section 20) which allows the Town to negotiate back taxes with developers undertaking brownfields projects. In 2007, the Town granted a \$1.2 million tax abatement and zoning permits to a land owner of a 30-acre site in the target area in order to assist in its remediation and redevelopment. The Town also established its own \$45,000 fund for oversight of the project and remediation activities are currently underway.

Leveraging Gap Financing: Clean-up and redevelopment will require additional funding. When the assessment phases are complete and potential costs identified, the following funding sources can be leveraged to do further assessment work, clean-up, reuse planning, and redevelopment, in addition to the Town resources outlined above:

- Property owners can access interest-free loans from the Massachusetts Brownfields Redevelopment Fund. Up to \$50,000 is available for ESAs and up to \$500,000 for environmental clean-up. The Town can access these funds in the form of grants.
- Framingham is part of the Framingham-Marlborough Regional Economic Target Area (ETA). The Town will consider entering into tax increment finance agreements to facilitate brownfields redevelopment projects. Since our designation as an ETA, Framingham has established eight (8) economic opportunity areas. The Tax Increment Financing (TIF) agreements for these locations have resulted in \$198 million in new investment and the creation of 7104 new jobs (with 20% of the new hires residents of the ETA).
- Framingham is a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Entitlement Community. The Town will consider use of CDBG funds for eligible brownfields work on a case-by-case basis.
- Future applications will be made as needed to the US EPA Brownfields Grant Program for further assessment and clean up-funding.

- The Town will consider adopting Chapter 43D, a state program that helps municipalities implement expedited permitting procedures for targeted redevelopment sites. Participation in the program would give the Town up to \$60,000 in technical assistance grants and priority consideration for state brownfields remediation programs.
- Urban Center Housing Tax Increment Financing Program gives the Town the ability to offer tax increment financing agreements to brownfields redevelopment projects with an affordable housing component in the Central Business District.
- The Town will work with developers to leverage the following funding programs as needed: Massachusetts Brownfields Tax Credit: Tax credit of up to 50% after a cleanup is completed, and 25% for a cleanup that uses an Activity and Use Limitation (AUL). Brownfields Redevelopment Access to Capital Program: State-subsidized environmental insurance for brownfields. MassBusiness Remediation Loans: Clean-up loans of \$500,000-\$2,000,000 to fund environmental remediation projects and related pre-development activities. State and Federal Historic Tax Credits are available for projects in the State and Federal historic district registries. Framingham has five historic districts, and numerous sites, many of which are located in the grant target area and has applied both programs on past projects. Federal Brownfields Tax Deduction Program: 100% federal tax deduction for brownfields cleanup costs incurred by an individual or entity with taxable federal income.

2.c. Programmatic Capability

2.c.i. Has Received EPA Brownfields Grant(s)

Current EPA Assessment Grant Funding: The Town was awarded its first EPA Assessment Grant in April 2008. We completed all our pre-award activities on schedule and have received EPA approval of our workplan and our public outreach program. Pre-award activities included: notification of community partners, community information forum (July 21st, 2008), website development and update, and a public comment period. We have established our Brownfields Advisory Committee and prepared and issued an RFP for an environmental consultant. Proposals are due on November 14, 2008 and we expect to conduct interviews and hire a consultant by December 12, 2008. We have initiated the EPA's grant invoicing program, and staff received ACRES training on November 13, 2008. We also have an excellent working relationship with our Region I EPA representatives and are making progress in outreach to the target community.

Staff: C&ED regularly manages federal grant-funded projects of various types and sizes. Projects are assigned to a Project Manager (PM) who handles day-to-day activities. The Director of C&ED or one of two Assistant Directors oversees the project and assures that additional personnel are brought into the project as needed. The resulting project team meets regularly to assure a successful project.

C&ED's Assistant Director will serve as the PM. He has 30 years of professional experience, including 15 years experience working for an environmental engineering company that was engaged in remediation activities and projects. He has extensive expertise in GIS/database management and environmental permitting of remediation projects. He has managed a variety of projects during his tenure with the Town involving administering state grants, overseeing consultants, and coordinating citizen committees. The senior planner assigned as staff has over nine years of professional experience. The Director has made sustainable economic development through brownfields revitalization a priority for C&ED. C&ED also has an additional planner on staff who will assist with brownfields work as needed. C&ED has one Administrative Assistant (AA) who performs accounts payable activities and assists the PM with financial and contract-related activities.

The Director will work with the PM and AA to coordinate administrative, finance, and procurement activities. All procurement documents, invoices, and similar documents are reviewed by the Director. The Town will hire an environmental consultant to conduct the Phase I and Phase II Assessments, and

participate in public outreach as needed. The AA is tri-lingual and provides translation services and community outreach services for the grant.

Town of Framingham's Procurement Process: The Town is governed by the Massachusetts Uniform Procurement Law (MGL Chapter 30B), which sets the framework for the purchase of goods and services. The Town will issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) in order to select proposals based on the application of comparative evaluation criteria. The low price is not the determining factor in this case, but the best overall value for the Town, as determined by the ranking of the criteria included in the RFP.

C&ED will develop an RFP, including a scope of work. The availability of the RFP will be advertised in a local newspaper and State Goods and Services Bulletin and posted in a designated, publicly accessible location in Town Hall. Contractors will be provided approximately three weeks to submit proposals, which will be reviewed and rated according to comparative criteria specified in the RFP. Documentation of the procurement processes will be maintained by the PM.

Contract Development and Execution: The Town uses a standard vendor contract, modified to accommodate the needs of each project including, in this case, compliance with federal grant requirements. The contract will be drafted by the Procurement Officer with input from the PM. The Chief Procurement Officer, Town Counsel, Town Accountant and Town Manager must sign off on all contracts.

Payment of Invoices: A monthly project update report and related invoices will be required of all vendors. Invoices will be processed by the AA after review by the PM. Five percent of all payments can be, and likely will be, retained until the project is completed to the Town's satisfaction. Upon satisfactory completion of the project, the retained payments will be released. The Town assures the vendor will receive payment within thirty days of receiving an accurate invoice.

The Town uses MUNIS, an integrated financial management software package, to track revenue and expenses. The Town Accountant audits all invoices for accuracy prior to payment. The Treasurer/Collector's Office mails or wires payments to vendors within ten calendar days of a payment request. The PM, AA and Director monitor budgets with regular reports from MUNIS, assuring that project costs do not exceed available funding.

Requests for Reimbursement: The PM will develop requests for reimbursement documentation (including completion of SF-270 Request for Advance or Reimbursement forms, or similar or supplemental forms as required by EPA). The Town Accountant will review documents to assure accuracy before they are submitted to EPA.

History of Managing Federal Funds: C&ED has significant experience managing federal funds. According to all current C&ED personnel none of the grants has adverse audit findings or needed to comply with special "High Risk" terms and conditions. In particular, Framingham's Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG) has received \$19,424,299.00 during its first 33 years; the Town's entitlement for the 2008 federal year was \$529,444.00 and HOME Investment Partnership Act Program Funding was \$382,612 for Federal FY08. In the last 10 years, the Town also received over \$1.1 million in federal grants from HUD, the National Park Service, and the Department of Justice. State agencies invested an additional \$386,000 in the Town and we expect to receive federal stabilization funding by the beginning of 2009 for foreclosure prevention.

Management of Federal CDBG Cooperative Agreements: As a CDBG Entitlement Community, Framingham receives an annual allocation that is administered by C&ED. In FY '08, the Town received almost \$530,000 for its housing and other community development activities, met all reporting requirements, and achieved expected results. Our Sign & Façade Program, funded with CDBG, is focused on providing funding to small businesses interested in upgrading their store fronts. The program boundaries include the downtown and along Waverly Street (Route 135), a major commercial corridor. Since its inception in 1997, the Program has resulted in improvements to 70 signs and 15 facades,

representing over \$225,032 in direct grants, leveraging \$829,120 in private investment toward the goal of eradicating blighted commercial property conditions in the delineated area within the community.

The Division has also developed standardized forms and procedures to uniformly collect data from clients served by CDBG-funded programs to facilitate compliance with HUD reporting requirements. Projects are monitored bi-annually and reports are filed to HUD. C&ED complies with the Davis Bacon Act for CDBG-funded infrastructure projects greater than \$2,500.

3. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND PARTNERSHIP

3.a. Community Engagement Plan

Stakeholders: There are three target audiences for outreach relating to the Town's brownfields program: the general community, property and business owners, and residents in the target community. Each group is best reached in different ways, so we have designed a plan to maximize our success in reaching all affected parties. Ultimately, we hope that the stakeholders will see us as a resource for information and understand the value of their role to the overall ongoing process.

The outreach budget includes funding for newspaper advertisements, postcard mailings, website notices, cable and radio advertising, translation services, and low- or no-cost strategies such as web site updates, press releases, email list serves, cable access, and notification through our community partners at key points throughout the project.

- **General Community:** The PM will report to the Board of Selectman regularly, representing an efficient mechanism to spread news town-wide since meetings are broadcast on the local cable access station and on streaming video via the Town website. In addition, the local press typically covers the meetings. C&ED has relationships with several reporters and can work with them on periodic press releases and stories in the local and Boston newspapers. Under the current grant, we established a website, www.framinghamma.gov/brownfields, which will be updated regularly. The website includes an e-mail address dedicated to public comment: brownfields@framinghamma.gov and encourages people to contact us at anytime with comments or questions. The Town's brownfields website has information in Portuguese, and there is also a "Translate" feature on the main page, allowing people to review anything on the site in whatever language they choose. All e-mail and phone inquiries will receive a prompt response. All public meeting notices will be submitted to the Town Clerk for inclusion in the Town-wide calendar, which is public record and posted on the Town's website. Public meeting notices will also be sent to the *MetroWest Daily News* as a Legal Notice, and postcards will be mailed to all Town Meeting Members.
- **Property and Business Owners:** As part of the current grant, we are reaching out to the Property and Business Owners, since the majority of the Town's contaminated sites are privately owned. This effort will educate property owners, business owners, developers, lenders, and the real estate community about the grant award, the Town's brownfields program, and the Massachusetts Voluntary Clean-up Program. This effort can help make the case for why property owners should undertake environmental assessment work. Information must be presented carefully to property owners, in a way that shows the assessment grant is an opportunity and not an enforcement action. The inclusion of the lending and real estate communities will help to encourage more property owner participation throughout the grant period. Building on the inventory and outreach work done for the current grant, property owner outreach will include letters to owners of suspected petroleum contamination sites. In addition, The MetroWest Chamber of Commerce will partner with us to reach them. At the appropriate time, C&ED will also help communicate which sites are ready for redevelopment through a commercial property clearinghouse.
- **Target Community:** Framingham's population is diverse and requires a variety of communication formats to successfully reach all segments. Electronic communication through the Town website, cable access, and e-mail listserves will be utilized as efficient and effective ways of reaching large segments of

the population. However, a significant portion of our public outreach resources will be allocated for grassroots outreach through our community partners, mailings, and for multi-lingual communication focused on the target community. At key points in the process, smaller neighborhood meetings will be held to engage the target communities. These meetings will be grassroots in nature and educational, yet informal to encourage maximum participation and create an open, non-threatening environment for people to share their concerns. The forums will be organized and advertised with the assistance of our network of community partners (see Section 3.c.) and held in the target neighborhoods. These meetings will provide baseline knowledge about the Town's brownfields work, and educate community members about how they can be involved in the process. They will allow residents to express their concerns about contaminated properties and other blighted sites. The target community is also a critical stakeholder in any discussions of site reuse and community vision. The target area for the brownfields program is our most culturally, ethnically, and linguistically diverse area of town, and unfortunately, is often the community most isolated from participation in local decision making. Our community partners were chosen partly for their strong reach into the target area. All printed materials and the project website will be translated into Portuguese and translators will be provided at all meetings and workshops. In the past, advertising events on the local Brazilian radio station and newspapers has proven to be an effective means of reaching the Brazilian population.

Stakeholder Workshops will be held at key points during the project: Award Notification/Kick-off; Inventory/Phase I Assessment; and Phase II/Reuse Planning. All workshops will be advertised in English and Portuguese in local papers and through fliers, targeted mailings, the website, and through our community partners. The workshops will all be held in downtown Framingham in order to be easily accessible to downtown and southeast Framingham residents. The downtown is also easily accessible by public transportation. At each project milestone, two workshops will be held: one on a weekday evening, the other during the day, so as to provide ample opportunity for people who may not work 9-5 to attend.

Brownfields Website: When the Town received its first assessment grant last year, the C&ED department expanded its existing brownfields webpage, <http://www.framinghamma.org/Brownfields>, to include, in English and Portuguese, a description of the assessment process, program updates, a list of sites being assessed, BAC information, a public meeting schedule, and a Frequently Asked Questions page. The EPA Assessment Grant proposal will be posted as well as Brownfields Program Manager contact information. The PM will maintain and regularly update the webpage.

Stakeholder Feedback: All correspondence relating to grant activities includes the Town's Brownfields website address and contact information. Oral comments presented at the forums will be documented and there will be an open invitation for comments on the project. After each workshop, materials will be posted to the website for review. Comments can also be submitted to the PM at any time, and all written and telephone comments will be documented and receive responses. The Town's PM is the community point of contact and manages cataloging and response to public comments. Instructions for submitting comments will be advertised on all program materials, at public events, and on the Town brownfields website. Questions will be researched and answered by the PM and common questions and their responses will be added to the Frequently Asked Question section on the Town's brownfields website.

Printed Materials:

- **Brownfields Program Brochure:** As part of the previous grant, a general brownfields program brochure is being developed to provide basic information about the brownfields project and to educate property owners and community members about how they can participate.
- **Annual Report:** A summary of brownfields activities and achievements will be included in the Town's Annual Report, published each spring. It contains a summary of the work of all Town departments and boards from the previous calendar year and is a cost-effective way to communicate program information and document the program as a part of the Town's official history.

E-mail Updates: Periodic program updates will be sent to Community Partners, subscribers to C&ED and other Town listserves.

3.b. Local, State and Tribal Partnerships

Interdepartmental Partnerships: Internally, the C&ED Division is working with the Framingham Health Department, Conservation Commission (ConCom), Department of Public Works (DPW), and Planning Board (PB). In addition to helping identify the existing health impacts of brownfields and the potential impacts and mitigation of the assessment, clean-up and redevelopment processes, the Health Department maintains records on all reported hazardous waste spills. The Health Department is the primary point of contact for MassDEP. They are already involved with C&ED's brownfields work and will continue to be an important partner for community outreach, education, advocacy, and determination of the best and most beneficial end uses from a community health perspective. Any information gathered during the Phase I and II Assessments that relates to public health will be shared immediately with the Health Department.

ConCom and DPW will be instrumental in helping identify sites including Town-owned, potential tax-title and private properties that have open space potential, or other mitigating factors such as wetland protection priorities. The PB is overseeing the Town's Master Plan and will be an important partner in reuse planning and redevelopment.

State Environmental Agency: Our partners at MassDEP, the state environmental protection agency, serve several roles: 1) As a *Technical Resource*, they can guide us through all phases of the assessment as well as subsequent projects, including clean-up and re-development. 2) As a *Funding Resource*, MassDEP can help identify other sources of funding at each phase and serve as a potential source of gap funding if necessary. 3) *Site Approval* is required by EPA from MassDEP for any site being considered for petroleum assessment. MassDEP will determine whether the site is viable, if a party with liability and funding for the property can be located, and if the site is a high priority for State funding.

Licensed Site Professionals: As mandated by the Massachusetts Contingency Plan, the state law governing the remediation of contaminated land, an LSP will supervise the Phase I and II assessments. The LSP assure that all work is done safely and in accordance with statute, and will provide the technical expertise necessary to ensure that clean-up plans will accommodate the redevelopment goals established by the community. As sites are identified for Phase I Assessment under the Petroleum Grant, we must also formally notify MassDEP Brownfields Program staff in order to get Site Approval to proceed.

The Massachusetts Voluntary Clean-up Program is a privatized program, implemented through LSPs who oversee projects from start to finish. An LSP will be retained to supervise all assessment work and will, as part of his contractual responsibilities, make all appropriate filings to list in the state inventory and to develop remediation plans consistent with State regulation.

U.S. EPA: The Town will take advantage of its strong working relationship with the EPA Region I Brownfields staff to stay current on the best public outreach methods and brownfield redevelopment strategies, and to help identify gap funding if necessary.

3.c. Community-Based Organizations

The Community Partners were chosen for their ability to help us reach a broad spectrum of constituents and for their general interest in either economic development or the Downtown. This group includes church congregations, local merchants and business owners, civic organizations, and downtown institutions. We have indicated to each that we expect them to help us primarily with engaging the community through advertising and hosting workshops and meetings, distributing information and soliciting feedback from their constituencies.

Organization	Activities	Role
BRAMAS (Brazilian American Association) and NAACP Bill Robinson (774)-217-3850	Education and outreach to minority communities	BRAMAS gives a voice to and provides information to the Brazilian population in Framingham. They focus on making government more accessible to Brazilians and are an important conduit for information dissemination and feedback in the target area.
Greater Framingham Community Church Rev. J. Anthony Lloyd (508) 626-2118	GFCC is a large African-American congregation in downtown	The GFCC is a valuable partner in reaching out to and understanding the issues facing minority populations in the target area. Rev. Lloyd is an advocate for his constituents and for downtown and can help publicize and host local workshops.
League of Women Voters of Framingham (LWV) Katie Murphy (508)872-5590	Voter education and citizen participation in government	The LWV has a well established role of hosting educational events that have political or economic impact. They will sponsor events for both their constituency and the general public and help publicize other events as needed.
MetroWest Chamber of Commerce Ted Welte (508) 879-5600	Business networking and advocacy organization	The Chamber has a wide reach in Framingham's business community and is very active in the Town's economic development activities. They will publicize brownfield activities to members, serve as facilitator between the public and private sectors as necessary, and play a major role in later phases of redevelopment sites moves into clean-up and reuse.
Economic Development and Industrial Corporation (EDIC) Ed Stoll (508) 877-7728	The EDIC works with the Selectmen and C&ED on economic development initiatives	The EDIC will be updated on project progress at their monthly meetings. They will help with outreach to the development community and will be particularly relevant during the planning for clean-up and reuse. They have bonding and eminent domain capabilities which could be helpful in reaching out to property owners.
Framingham Downtown Renaissance (FDR) John Stasik (508) 877-6771	FDR is a non-profit organization dedicated to downtown revitalization	An "organization of organizations," FDR has a wide reach and bridges the business, cultural, institutional, government, and residential communities. FDR will be informed with monthly updates and periodic outreach to its constituency, and will be instrumental with clean-up and reuse planning.
MassDEP Catherine Finneran (617) 556-1138	State office for environmental affairs	See discussion of the State DEP role above in 3.b

4. PROJECT BENEFITS

Our Brownfields project has been designed to be holistic in nature. Our vision is to fulfill the following objectives: increase economic activity and tax revenue, promote environmental and economic equity, create jobs in low income neighborhoods and jobs that don't require neighborhood residents to rely on cars, restore environmentally damaged properties, and improve the health of target area residents.

4.a. Welfare and/or Public Health

In downtown and southeast Framingham, large car storage lots, gasoline service stations and junkyards often sit side-by-side with small two and three-family homes or wetlands. Initiating brownfields redevelopment in these neighborhoods will help to remove the visual blight of underutilized land; create more complimentary land uses; create jobs for local residents; identify and eliminate risks to human health; protect wetland and water resources; and promote transit-oriented growth and redevelopment close to downtown's commuter rail and public transportation hub. Cleaning up the Brownfield sites and creating new economic activity in these neighborhoods will present opportunities for area residents to stay in town to work, which is particularly significant for an area with a higher than average number of zero-vehicle households. Remediation will also serve as a stabilizing factor for these neighborhoods that have been hard hit by the national foreclosure crisis.

Brownfields assessment funding and the associated public outreach program will provide the opportunity for targeted outreach to under-represented and under-served populations, thus building trust and opening new channels of communication that can support community-based redevelopment planning for brownfields as well as other infrastructure and redevelopment projects. This foundation will help advance Framingham's goals for sustainable economic development, resource protection, and smart growth.

The inventory and assessment work, which will identify the best sites for redevelopment and the location and extent of the contamination, will also help determine where development can go, clarify risk for developers, and determine appropriate reuse. This public sector commitment and attention will help to stimulate private sector interest in the most appropriate sites, thus promoting redevelopment, short and long term job creation, and ultimately, stabilization and expansion of the Town's tax base.

Brownfields redevelopment will complement other programmatic initiatives now underway in south Framingham. It is also a key component for the Town's vision of downtown Framingham—an integrated hub of transit oriented development complemented by new commercial and residential uses built around newly upgraded roads, sidewalks and pedestrian amenities anchored by a civic center complex to the north and an ethnic village to the south.

The brownfields assessment grants will have lasting effects on the environment and public health of the target area. Identifying oil contamination, especially when underground tanks exist and are possibly leaching into the groundwater, is the first step towards protecting fragile wetland and stream ecosystems. It also reduces the potential for drinking water contamination from harmful petroleum additives like BTEX and MTBE. Secondary benefits include creating opportunities for new open space like the community gardens being discussed by the Town's Agricultural Committee and for new development that includes open space, removes blight, creates jobs, and promotes physical and social stability. With the significant outreach component, the Petroleum Assessment Grant also provides opportunities for better relationships between the residents and the Town, which will lead to better informed and empowered residents both on brownfields as well as other issues that affect them.

4.b. Economic Benefits

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

Economic: Investing federal grant money in downtown and southeast Framingham will send a signal to the private sector, inspiring confidence that local, state, and federal entities deem this a worthy investment. The inventory and assessment work will help us to identify the best sites for clean-up and redevelopment, and will help to entice developers to invest in Framingham. Redevelopment of underutilized land resources and mothballed properties near transit is Framingham's best option for housing, job creation and sustainable economic growth. The assessment work will open the door for private developers to participate in the revitalization of Downtown and southeast Framingham. Improvements to parcels that are currently eye-sores and hazards will enhance property values and make the neighborhood more attractive. New mixed-use redevelopments, building on Framingham's economic strengths including light manufacturing, bio-technology, education, healthcare, and the creative economy, will enhance the Town's

tax base, create jobs in the Town's poorest neighborhoods, and reinvigorate an area of town that has seen little private investment since the manufacturing sector began to diminish three decades ago.

Conducting the Phase I and Phase II assessments will help Framingham officials foster a vibrant, equitable and healthy community. As we embark on reuse and redevelopment, the Town is interested in incorporating the following redevelopment strategies in the target area:

- Identify areas where rezoning is needed to better reflect current land use or promote a better use
- Select and implement appropriate institutional controls
- Encourage reuse of older, obsolete properties for new mixed use and mixed income housing¹⁰
- Introduce streetscape and public space enhancements as part of the redevelopment planning to improve the appearance and walkability of downtown and southeast Framingham neighborhoods
- Create pocket parks on parcels with marginal or poor redevelopment potential
- Foster transit oriented development in Southeast Framingham, building on similar efforts already underway in Downtown

The inventory and assessment work will allow us to re-evaluate the existing zoning in the target area by identifying what kinds of uses and redevelopments will be appropriate.

Framingham is a largely built-out community. Most open space that does exist is either an active agricultural resource or protected. While the Brownfields project is primarily intended to increase economic development (and the tax dollars derived by such development), the Town of Framingham has a much larger vision for what this project can accomplish. Our Brownfields project has the potential to create new jobs in distressed neighborhoods where many people live below the poverty line, do not own cars and depend on public transportation to reach employment and shopping centers. The project will also help to stabilize neighborhoods that have been devastated by the foreclosure crisis. Restoring environmentally damaged properties could also help address the documented health problems in the target area. Removing environmental hazards helps to restore the natural environment which in turn benefits the health of those residents living in close proximity.

Open Space: Despite Framingham's wide spectrum of Town-owned and operated open spaces, downtown and southeast Framingham remain woefully underserved in terms of usable open space for active or passive recreation. The 2008 update to the Open Space and Recreation Plan identifies two major projects within the target area that are on or near potential brownfield sites. Assessment and eventual clean-up of those properties will be important first steps towards developing much needed open space.

Framingham is committed to the creation and preservation of open spaces, not only for recreation, but for ecological health and balance, and has a track record of leveraging redevelopment to clean-up and re-use brownfields for that purpose. The Town negotiated a Tax Increment Financing deal to encourage Staples, Inc. to cap a landfill and use that area to expand their corporate headquarters. The new campus includes open space that provide critical habitat and drainage and groundwater recharge areas. This assessment project will help to identify other target properties that will be appropriate for similar redevelopment projects that can help to protect existing, and possibly even create new, open spaces.

4.b.ii. Non-Economic Benefits

The Town is updating its Master Plan and will be securing a consultant to assist in this endeavor in early 2009. According to the existing plan's Vision Statement, "Existing commercial centers will be used in efficient ways, including re-using older outdated, vacant or underused buildings and increasing densities where appropriate." The master planning process will run concurrently with the brownfields project, providing the opportunity to integrate brownfields into the Town's overall economic development plan.

¹⁰ The Town's inclusionary zoning bylaw requires that developments that include more than 10 units must provide at least 10% of the units at a rate affordable to households earning less than 80% of the area median income.

The Board of Selectmen has a vision, which reads in part: “Our Town shall strive to assure a sense of security by providing excellent public safety and public works, strong financial health, a well managed town government with long range planning and one that encourages a healthy business sector.” Not only does our Brownfields project encourage a healthy business center, it is an attempt to implement our long range plans for the target area. In March of 2008, the existing conditions report for a downtown study commissioned by the Town cited several streets within the brownfields target area as “potential development sites”, including: Blandin Avenue; and Franklin, Irving, Pearl, Claflin Kendall and Frederick Streets as well as vacant and underutilized land isolated by intersecting rail lines. The recommendations from this study will also inform reuse planning in the downtown. Addressing underutilized commercial properties will also help stabilize neighborhoods with large numbers of residential foreclosures, stimulating private sector investment and bolstering public perceptions and confidence.

4.c Environmental Benefits from Infrastructure Reuse/Sustainable reuse

Framingham is committed to pursuing smart growth and green development. As a measure of our commitment, Framingham ranks 4th out of 120 communities that submitted their FY08 applications to the State’s Commonwealth Capital Grant Program. This program scores communities on the level of their achievement of the State’s goals for sustainable practices. Specific examples include:

- Unique transit access including: Commuter Rail service to the region’s largest cities—Boston and Worcester; direct Amtrak Regional Rail service to Springfield, MA, Albany, NY and other destinations; and, the MetroWest Regional Transit Authority (MWRTA), providing public bus service in the region.
- Mixed-use zoning, adopted in 1999, promotes higher density and a mix of uses in the central business district (CBD), near bus and train hubs and allows for shared parking and reduced parking ratios for mixed use developments.
- Stringent wetlands protection by-law ensures that new development does not negatively impact Framingham’s substantial wetlands network.
- Construction and stormwater best management practices (BMPs) are being developed to protect the environment during construction, provide sustainable stormwater management after construction is complete, reduce stormwater runoff, and improve water quality. BMPs include: erosion control structures, bioretention cells, detention structures, permeable paving, and water quality hydrodynamic and oil separators.

Building on these tools and resources, this project will help C&ED make recommendations about the reuse of brownfield sites. Brownfield redevelopments will be governed by progressive mixed-use zoning regulations and will result in better utilization of land resources. Additionally, the target area has significant wetlands and water resources; the ESAs will help to identify wetland and other natural resources that will benefit from remediation. Redevelopment of older properties will help to ensure that these delicate natural resources are remediated, restored where possible, and protected from future harm. The existing wetlands are the remnants of wetlands that comprised a significant portion of the target area prior to development in the 19th and 20th centuries. With the reduction in permeable surfaces resulting from development, stormwater runoff in Beaver Dam Brook, Course Brook, and Farm Pond causes flooding during significant storms. BMPs have been proven to reduce stormwater runoff in redeveloped areas by as much as 80%¹¹; which will lead to less flooding, fewer drought conditions during dry weather, and improvement in the water quality of the runoff that does occur. The construction process during brownfield redevelopment projects will utilize BMPs to prevent erosion and maintain the water quality

Framingham residents and businesses are also becoming more aware of sustainable building practices. In 2006, Town Meeting established the Greener Framingham Committee with a mandate to improve sustainable practices throughout the Town. Town officials recently toured Genzyme’s new LEED Gold

¹¹ *Massachusetts Nonpoint Source Pollution Management Manual*, published by the MassDEP April 2006.

Certified R&D facility in Tech Park. Further, the Planning Board, which must approve most development projects, looks favorably on projects that incorporate sustainable site and building projects or neighborhood mitigation activities in their projects. A wind turbine project was approved in 2008 by the Town's Zoning Board.

4.d. Plan for Tracking and Measuring Progress

Project schedules and related task deadlines are included in all procurement specifications. The PM will assure all tasks are completed on time and within budget. Project scheduling software is used by the PM to track program tasks and timeframes. At a minimum, the PM will hold monthly meetings with the Town's consultants. Regularly scheduled staff meetings will provide general updates to the Director. The PM will organize project team meetings at least once a month, but likely more often. The PM will submit summary reports of the project's process to the Director on a quarterly basis, roughly four weeks before quarterly reporting is due to the EPA. Once the report is reviewed, the Director will hold a quarterly meeting to review progress towards achieving the expected goals and outputs. At this meeting all pertinent issues will be reviewed including budget, consultant management, and quarterly reporting. The Director will keep the Board of Selectmen updated.

C&ED will report to the EPA at the end of each quarter describing accomplishments as well as an explanation of any problems, delays, or cost overruns. The PM has established an excellent working relationship with the EPA Region 1 staff for our FY08 grant and will contact them as needed with major issues and scope changes. All required reporting will be built into the project's schedule.

Outputs:

- Completion of environmental assessment work including an update of the inventory of brownfields sites that was completed under the FY08-11 EPA grant as well as up to 12 Phase I and up to 6 Phase II ASTM ESAs.
- Implementation of comprehensive public outreach campaign including: 6 community forums (1 Community-wide Grant Announcement Forum, 1 Stakeholder Workshop and 1 neighborhood forum at the Inventory/Phase I stage; and 1 Stakeholder Workshop and 1 neighborhood forum at Phase II/Reuse stage and 1 visioning charette);
- Up to 2 postcard mailings to 8,400 households in the target area to announce community forums (16,800 postcards mailed);
- Distribution of 5,000 copies of a brownfields program brochure;
- Enhancement and translation of brownfields program website;

Outcomes:

- Identification of brownfields sites to prioritize clean-up and redevelopment projects
- Reduction in number of contaminated sites and acres of land; and halt to the spread of environmental contamination to the Town's wetlands resources and to sites abutting contaminated properties.
- Promotion of redevelopment of underutilized and vacant parcels in the target area.
- Increased awareness of brownfields issues to prevent future contamination.
- Protection of the health of residents who reside and work near contaminated sites.
- Increase in participation of the immigrant and minority residents of downtown and southeast Framingham as a result of grassroots outreach to 8,400 households.
- Creation and protection of open space resources.