



## CITY OF CARIBOU, MAINE

*Office of the City Manager  
25 High St.  
Caribou, ME 04736  
[citymanager@cariboumaine.org](mailto:citymanager@cariboumaine.org)  
Tel: 207-493-5961 Fax: 207-498-3954*

FY2023 Brownfields Cleanup Grant Application  
RFA No.: EPA-I-OLEM-OBLR-22-09  
Narrative Information Sheet

1. Applicant Identification: City of Caribou, 25 High St. Caribou, ME 04736
  
2. Funding Requested:
  - a. Single Site Cleanup
  - b. Federal funds requested: \$900,000
  
3. Location:
  - a. City: Caribou
  - b. County: Aroostook
  - c. State: Maine
  
4. Property Information: Caribou Diesel Electric Power Plant and Outbuildings  
142 Lower Lyndon St.  
Caribou, ME 04736
  
5. Contacts:
  - a. Project Director:  
Name: Penny Thompson, City Manager  
Phone: 207-493-5961  
Email: [citymanager@cariboumaine.org](mailto:citymanager@cariboumaine.org)  
Mailing Address: 25 High St., Caribou, ME 04736
  
  - b. Chief Executive:  
Name: Jody Smith, Mayor  
Phone: 207-493-5961  
Email: [jsmith@cariboumaine.org](mailto:jsmith@cariboumaine.org)  
Mailing Address: 25 High St., Caribou, ME 04736

6. Population: 7,396 (Source: 2020 Census)

7. Other Factors:

<b>Other Factors</b>	<b>Yes/No</b>	<b>Page #</b>
Community Population is 10,000 or less.	Yes	1
The Applicant is, or will assist, a federally recognized Indian tribe or United States Territory.	No	N/A
The proposed brownfield site is impacted by mine-scarred land.	No	N/A
Secured firm leveraging commitment ties directly to the project and will facilitate completion of the remediation/reuse; secured resource is identified in the narrative and substantiated in the attached documentation.	Yes	3 – 4
The proposed site is adjacent to a body of water (i.e., the border of the proposed site is contiguous or partially contiguous to the body of water)	Yes	1
The proposed site is in a federally designated floodplain.	Yes	1 – 2
The reuse of the proposed cleanup site will facilitate renewable energy from wind, solar or geothermal energy.	Yes	3
The reuse of the proposed cleanup site will incorporate energy efficiency measures.	Yes	2 – 3
The reuse strategy or project reuse of the proposed site considers climate adaptation and/or mitigation efforts.	Yes	3
The target area is located within a community in which a coal-fired power plant has recently closed (2012 or later) or is closing.	No	N/A

8. Releasing Copies of Applications: N/A

City of Caribou Maine  
FY2023 Brownfields Cleanup Grant Application  
RFA No.: EPA-I-OLEM-OBLR-22-09

LETTER FROM  
STATE ENVIRONMENTAL AUTHORITY



JANET T. MILLS  
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MAINE  
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION



MELANIE LOYZIM  
COMMISSIONER

November 14, 2022

Ms. Christine Lombard  
EPA Region 1  
5 Post Office Square  
Suite 100, Mailcode: OSRR7-2  
Boston, Massachusetts 02109-3912

Dear Ms. Lombard:

The Maine Department of Environmental Protection’s (“Department”) Bureau of Remediation and Waste Management acknowledges that the City of Caribou, as a qualifying municipal government, plans to conduct cleanups and is applying for federal Brownfields grant funds for FY23.

Penny Thompson, Caribou’s City Manager, has developed an application requesting site-specific federal Brownfields Cleanup funding for the Diesel Electric Power Plant and Associated Outbuildings site located at 142 Lower Lyndon Street in Caribou, Maine.

The Diesel Electric Power Plant and Associated Outbuildings site is:

- i. eligible to be enrolled in the state voluntary response program (the Voluntary Response Action Program—VRAP);
- ii. is not currently enrolled, but intends to be enrolled, in the state voluntary response program; and
- iii. has had a sufficient level of site characterization from the environmental site assessments performed to date for the remediation work to begin on the site.

If the City of Caribou receives funding, the Department’s VRAP staff will provide review and comment on feasibility studies and remedial workplans, and will provide oversight (as necessary) of contractor’s work at the properties. Upon successful completion of remedial activities at a property, the VRAP will provide protections from Department enforcement actions by issuing a Commissioner’s Certificate of Completion.

Please feel free to call me directly at (207) 592-0882 should you have any questions regarding this letter.

Sincerely,

Nicholas J. Hodgkins  
Voluntary Response Action Program  
Division of Remediation  
Maine Department of Environmental Protection

AUGUSTA  
17 STATE HOUSE STATION  
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333-0017  
(207) 287-7688 FAX: (207) 287-7826

BANGOR  
106 HOGAN ROAD, SUITE 6  
BANGOR, MAINE 04401  
(207) 941-4570 FAX: (207) 941-4584

PORTLAND  
312 CANCO ROAD  
PORTLAND, MAINE 04103  
(207) 822-6300 FAX: (207) 822-6303

PRESQUE ISLE  
1235 CENTRAL DRIVE, SKYWAY PARK  
PRESQUE ISLE, MAINE 04769  
(207) 764-0477 FAX: (207) 760-3143

## **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**

Caribou, incorporated in 1859, the most northeastern city in the U.S., is located on the Aroostook River, just ten minutes from the Canadian border. The Aroostook River is a noted trout and salmon fishery and is well-known for its scenic, historical, and recreational values. The international border with Canada is just 15 river miles downstream of the site. Consisting of 79.29 square miles, and a population of 7,367 (density of 93.3 people/sq mi), Caribou meets the census definition of a rural small town. Caribou experiences social, environmental, economic and health and welfare disparities typical of a rural community including remoteness from urban areas (Portland, ME is 300 miles and 5 hours away) and climate extremes exacerbated by geography and global warming. Until the late 1960's, it was the world's largest potato shipping hub, and a service community to Loring Air Force Base, until it closed in 1994, ushering in a period of disinvestment. The city struggles to maintain a strong economy and has lost 42% of its population since 1960 (12,500). Other impacts include decreased property values due to vacancy and blight, and loss of job opportunities due to business closures. To make Caribou an attractive place to live and do business, the City Council prioritizes addressing the challenges of the shrinking tax base and blighted properties. Brownfields challenges include: 4 brownfield sites, 45 underground storage tank sites, 15 active RCRA hazardous waste sites, 9 inactive hazardous waste sites (EPA EnviroAtlas). In a rural, remote, disparate community such as Caribou, brownfields exacerbate public health and environmental risks, and social and economic burdens. Wind-blown contaminants expose residents walking and living nearby; potential spills of unsecured hazardous materials threaten ground/surface water, and already-stressed neighborhood property values have declined. During a Fall 2022 town visioning session, residents ranked Riverfront Renaissance efforts second in importance to economic development and tourism. Our target area is in the highly valued riverfront revitalization district of Census Tract 230039514.

**1.a.ii. Description of the Proposed Brownfield Site** The **brownfield priority site** targeted by this project is an **abandoned diesel power plant and associated outbuildings** in the floodplain of the Aroostook River, and within the urban compact area of Caribou, Maine at 142 Lower Lyndon St. This site was selected because this area of the city is disproportionately impacted by several brownfield sites, and to protect the underserved community and river. Located on the west side of the Aroostook River near the historic Caribou Dam, the target site commands breathtaking views of the river and expansive landscape. The site and adjacent dam have historically (circa 1889) been the location of power generation (until 2012) and public water supply (until 2006). Located less than one half mile from the downtown area, the site is of local, regional, and international environmental concern due to waste oil, hazardous substances, and asbestos-containing materials (ACM) located in unsafe, dilapidated structures. Investigation has shown that soil and groundwater contamination is nonexistent. The 3.2-acre site is the northern portion of Map 25 Lot 149AA owned by the City of Caribou, approximately .5 miles from the downtown area. FEMA Flood Maps indicate that the eastern property boundary and structures are located within the 100-year floodplain. Site topography is flat with a steep embankment to the Aroostook River. Identified in the 2021 Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment, the structures that need remediation include a 12,200-square foot brick and steel diesel electrical power plant (in operation 1949- 2012) and outbuildings, including an oil tank building, oil storage building, pump station, pump house and two storage buildings. Approximately 11,320 gallons of waste oil and hazardous substances were inventoried at the site, including stored diesel, lube oil, waste oil, waste oil-contaminated water,

sludge, antifreeze, degreaser/solvent, and water treatment chemicals. According to the 2022 Phase II Environmental Site Assessment and a 2022 hazardous building materials survey, ACM was identified in roofing (12,500 square feet), window glaze (1,600 square feet), floor tile and mastic (600 square feet), and stored material (white board insulation). Electrical wire coating and gaskets are presumed positive for asbestos. LBP, universal and hazardous waste including mercury-containing fixtures and components, UPS batteries (75), potential lead-containing glass block windows (575 square feet), potential PCB-containing ballasts, and e-waste are present.

**Currently an eyesore, target for vandalism, and unsafe, unauthorized shelter for the homeless, the site is a reminder of the blight and economic challenges the community has experienced in the last 30 years. This project will clean up and dispose of hazardous substances so that the buildings can be demolished, and public health and safety risks, environmental, and water quality threats will be eliminated. Restoration and reuse of this scenic, environmentally, and culturally significant riverfront site will be a catalyst and symbol of a revitalized community and create a positive environment for new investment. It will create a renewed sense of place in this disparate, rural, remote community facing multi-faceted health, economic, social, and environmental challenges.**

### **1.b. Revitalization of the Target Area**

1.b.i. Reuse Strategy and Alignment with Revitalization Plans The projected re-use for the remediated diesel power plant site is a riverfront greenspace/park, aligned not only with its location in a federally designated floodplain, and but also with community goals, future visions, and adjacent land use. A 2009 Downtown Revitalization Plan, and the 2014 Comprehensive Plan discuss the need for removal of blight and revitalization of Caribou's Aroostook riverfront. A Caribou Riverfront Revitalization Committee (CRRC) was officially established by the Council in 2020 to evaluate and plan for cleanup and development of the riverfront. The Planning Board is actively rezoning the area to promote mixed use and recreation. The Maine Department of Transportation, at the request of the CRRC, is considering reuse of the riverfront railroad right of way for a recreational trail. Atlantic Salmon of Northern Maine, Inc. plans a fish hatchery/park on an adjacent riverfront parcel. To kick off the 2024 Comprehensive Planning process, an October 2022 visioning session was attended by over fifty residents. It was acknowledged that riverfront redevelopment is long overdue, and the consensus was, "We need to keep the momentum going." This brownfields proposal and public hearing are catalysts for discussion leading to redevelopment and removal of blight, and reduction of public health and safety concerns. It is serving to kickstart revitalization activities.

1.b.ii. Outcomes and Benefits of Reuse Strategy Caribou's sustainable brownfield reuse strategy has been welcomed by citizens and provides the perfect opportunity to highlight riverfront revitalization efforts and increase community pride and sense of place for residents. Health, welfare, and safety for sensitive populations will be increased by contaminant and blight removal and creation of a new scenic recreation area. Not only will remediation of contamination make possible a new community greenspace with a scenic view of the river, but the reuse plan is a first step and needed symbol of transformation, community pride, environmental stewardship and health and welfare. The international gateway to Caribou will become more scenic. Vacant, distressed property with blighted structures and crumbling pavement will become a grassy park, restoring the natural landscape. No businesses or residents will be displaced by this project. Opportunities abound for historical and cultural education, such as an informational kiosk about the historical importance of the site to the community for water and power supply, as well as education about renewable hydropower at the dam. Energy efficient lighting will be incorporated

into park design. Renewable energy and resiliency will be facilitated by this project: Remediation and reuse of the site will ease the planned restoration of hydropower generation at the adjacent dam by improving access and security. Local solar electric power operations feeding the substation adjacent to target site will benefit from the increased security resulting from the cleanup. Additional elements of “resilient revitalization” include 1) reduced impacts of climate change (weather extremes: “more frequent and severe storms”) by elimination of impermeable surfaces adjacent to the river and 2) maximizing the recycling rate of demolition materials; it is estimated that at least 50% will be diverted from the waste stream.

The primary benefit will be an overall increase in sense of place - the feeling of community connectedness - for improved well-being and community investment, as well as social resilience in times of economic and pandemic stress.

**1.c. Strategy for Leveraging Resources:**

1.c.i. Resources Needed for Site Characterization: Phase 1 and Phase II studies have been completed for the site. Though it is not expected that further characterization will be needed, EPA’s Targeted Brownfields Assessment Program is available.

1.c.ii. Resources Needed for Site Remediation: This grant will provide the funds needed for cleanup of the Caribou Diesel Electric Power Plant and associated outbuildings. Unforeseen remediation costs can be covered by Maine Department of Environmental Protection Regional Response Services, State of Maine Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund (RLF), Eastern Maine Development Corporation RLF. Direct and indirect costs for grant administration will be provided by the City of Caribou.

1.c.iii. Resources Needed for Site Reuse: The City of Caribou is committed to complete the demolition not necessary to cleanup, and site restoration for reuse. Tax Increment Financing Funds (TIF) will be used for these purposes. A right-of-way for a connected riverfront trail has been committed. Adjacent corporate landowners have expressed support for recreational reuse and may provide site enhancements such as fencing, murals and educational displays. Applicant expects to procure proposed leveraging consistent with terms of the announcement and narrative; the grant will stimulate the availability of additional resources.

Name of Resource	(1.c.i.) Assessment , (1.c.ii.) Remediation, or (1.c.iii.) Reuse	Secured/ Unsecured	Details
Proceeds from recycled tank	Reuse	Secured	Funds from sale of bulk tank~ \$12,000
Regional ME DEP response services; ME/EMDC RLF	Remediation	Unsecured	Available if necessary, during cleanup
City of Caribou/ Tax Increment Financing Program	Reuse	Secured	1. Funds for demolition of remaining site buildings and paved area. 2. Signage and photo documentation 3. Site restoration for park
Caribou Riverfront Renaissance Committee	Reuse	Secured	MasterPlanning/promotion fundraising for reuse as open space/riverfront park

Engie NA	Reuse	Unsecured	Corporate renewable energy partner for energy-efficient lighting solutions.
Maine Community Foundation	Reuse	Unsecured	Among numerous private sources for small community benefit funds.
Versant Power	Reuse	Unsecured	Secure fencing/mural
AlgonquinGen.Co.	Reuse	Unsecured	Hydropower revitalization
Atlantic Salmon N. ME.	Reuse	Secured	Grant-seeking/recreational development/ Access ROW

1.c.iv. Use of Existing Infrastructure Existing infrastructure includes electricity, and municipal water/sewer. Electricity will be used for efficient lighting. No additional infrastructure needs are foreseen. An adjacent railroad right of way and unpaved roadway allow pedestrian and vehicle access to the site and an upstream recreational boat landing.

**2. COMMUNITY NEED AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

**2.a. Community Need**

2.a.i. The Community’s Need for Funding: This grant is necessary for the City of Caribou which is unable to fund environmental remediation and subsequent reuse due to small population and low income. Between the 2010 and 2020 census, Caribou (pop. 7,396) was the fastest-shrinking city in Maine. Caribou’s median household income of \$42,325 is 29% below Maine median income of \$59,489, and 38% below the U.S. median household income of \$67,521. The poverty rate in Caribou is 14%, above the state rate of 11.5%. Child poverty rate is 20%; state rate is 13%. (US Census; County Health Rankings 2022). Most new construction has been government-related, and therefore tax-exempt, resulting in a tax base not keeping up with increasing municipal expenses; resulting in a lack of financial resources for site cleanup. This grant will fulfill community need for blight removal and recreational space.

2.a.ii. Threats to Sensitive Populations

(1) Health or Welfare of Sensitive Populations (5) Sensitive populations facing greater susceptibility to the risks/challenges of environmental degradation, climate change, crime, vandalism and blight in the target area are seniors over 65, low-income population, and veterans. The proportion of senior and veteran residents is greater locally than both state and national averages. Seniors over 65 comprise 27% of residents in Caribou; compared with US rate of 17%. The local hospital service area contains 92% higher proportion of seniors than nationwide. Local veteran population is 14% compared to 7% nationwide (US Census); the local hospital service area contains 88% more veterans than hospitals nationally (Cary Medical Center). All (100%) of the population is rural, which denotes disadvantaged and underserved, as rural populations are “systematically denied a full opportunity to participate in many aspects of social, economic and civic life.” (E.O.13985) They face significant welfare issues, as supported by indicators such as public assistance (3.3% compared to 2.4% nationally), and SNAP benefits (21% compared to 11.4% nationally). Food insecurity affects 16% of residents compared to 12.4% Maine, 12% U.S. EJSCREEN data place Caribou’s low-income population at the 69<sup>th</sup> percentile in the state; within a .5-mile radius around the site, this increases to 80<sup>th</sup> percentile.

**The most prevalent stressors to local sensitive populations are low household income, energy costs (related to low incomes), asthma, and obesity and lack of physical activity (EJ Screens, 2021 Maine County Health rankings, 2022 Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA), US Census).**



2) Greater than Normal Incidence of Disease and Adverse Health Conditions Caribou, as part of Aroostook County, experiences the highest rate (21%) of people with fair or poor health in the state. **The County ranks 14th out of 15 for low quality of life/health outcomes** (2022 Maine County Health rankings). Also highest is the percentage of adults who are obese, 38%, with 36% reporting no leisure time physical activity. A local community health assessment also reports that obesity in our hospital service area is more prevalent than in those of 78% of hospitals nationwide. A newly released Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) cites cancer as the #1 local health priority with 69.3% of survey respondents rating it as extremely important. While all cancer rates are near state/national averages, the 46% rate of colon cancer is of concern compared to 36%. Cancer is the second leading cause of death in Aroostook County with a higher mortality rate than statewide. Higher than average asthma rates impact 12.8% of County population, compared with 11.4% statewide and 9.4% nationwide. Youth asthma impacts 13.7% compared to 7.9% nationally. The local rate of COPD is 11.8% compared to 6.5% nationally, resulting in almost double the state and national rate of COPD hospitalizations: 31.3% vs. 16.7% (ME), 16.3% (U.S.). Other CHNA areas of concern are: All hospitalizations: 81% vs 61% statewide, individuals with disabilities: 22.3% locally, 16% Maine, 12.7% U.S.; heart attack deaths: 31.3% locally, ~25% Maine and U.S. This cleanup grant and associated reuse strategy will reduce threats and address the health and welfare of sensitive residents:

Exposure to currently unsecured pollutants such as petroleum, VOCs and metals present at the site are cancer/health risks to vulnerable residents visiting this site, either through direct contact or threat of ground and surface water contamination. The threat of exposure to airborne asbestos by those affected with asthma and COPD will be mitigated by this cleanup. New opportunities for accessible recreation and physical activity for overweight/obese residents will be provided.

(3) Promoting Environmental Justice Two of the three census tracts of Caribou, including the target site, are designated Justice 40 areas by the Council on Environmental Quality Climate and Economic Justice Screening tool, validating Caribou’s health, economic and social disparities. Cited parameters below threshold criteria include household income less than twice the federal poverty level (70-90%), 60-80% less than high school education, low enrollment in higher education (96%), health burden (above 90%-asthma and heart disease), and energy burden (88-90% costs related to household income). **In target site census tract, 13% of housing units are vacant, up 37% from 2010; and 21% of residents are below the poverty line compared to 14% in all of Caribou and the county (2020 Census).** The requested funds will promote environmental justice by cleaning up the contaminated and blighted riverfront area in this disadvantaged neighborhood, and provide an upgraded, clean area in which low-income citizens and sensitive populations (children, veterans, seniors) can recreate and feel pride, rather than be concerned about health hazards, personal safety, and vandalism. A beautiful, revitalized riverfront will spur economic development and justice to the currently underprivileged neighborhood.

**2.b. Community Engagement**

2.b.i. Project Involvement and 2.b.ii. Project Roles: Key stakeholders engaged in providing input, facilitating community communication, and making decisions for the cleanup and reuse of the site will be convened as a Project Steering Committee.

<b>Partner Organization/Entity/Group</b>	<b>Point of Contact Name, email,</b>	<b>Specific Role/ Involvement</b>
Caribou Riverfront Renaissance Committee	Ken Murchison kmurchison@cariboumaine.org	Input and community engagement; riverfront Master Planning

Caribou Recreation Commission	Gary Marquis gmarquis@cariboumaine.org	Trail connections, site design/landscaping input
Caribou Organization Promoting Public Safety	Miles Williams [REDACTED]	Incorporate best practices for Safety
Atlantic Salmon for Northern Maine, Inc.	Brian Fields [REDACTED]	Community education, access and facilities planning; funding partner
Versant Power	Kevin Webber Kevin.webber@versantpower.com	Provide input as adjacent landowner; beautification
Caribou Planning Board	Dan Bagley [REDACTED]	Input and community engagement
Northern Maine Development Commission	Jay Kamm jkamm@nmdc.org	Environmental/economic planning input; funding
Age-Friendly Caribou	Elizabeth Singer esinger@carymed.org	Input and community engagement with seniors
Algonquin Northern Maine Generation Co.	Kevin Quilliam Kevin.quilliam@inclimesolutions.com	Preserve history/culture. Potential hydropower education/restoration

**2.b.iii Incorporating Community Input**

The Steering Committee will be convened via Zoom/in person at least three times during the project: initial, mid-point, and final. Strategies to communicate project progress to the local community will include monthly updates to the City Council, broadcast and recorded on YouTube; and updates and photos on the City Facebook page (6500 followers), a robust platform for citizen comments and input. Project staff will maintain a photo journal including drone footage and an on-site billboard. Neighboring residents will be updated by mail. The Caribou Riverfront Renaissance Committee will consider project progress at its monthly public meetings and in overall Riverfront Master Planning. The city website, www.cariboumaine.org, provides local news and updates, including grant documents and project plans. Local newspaper and television will feature updates and a series about project progress. Caribou’s Comprehensive Plan is being updated for 2024 with resident workgroups who will be apprised of progress and provide input. Public comment and suggestions will be encouraged and solicited through all public meetings and social media, to be intentionally considered and responded to by the City Manager and Mayor, as well as City Council, Planning Board and Riverfront Committee. The City Manager will ensure that administrative staff is dedicated to promotion and incorporation of community input. Alternatives to in-person community engagement in the event of social distancing or other COVID-19-related restrictions will include virtual town hall style meetings and/or Facebook live events to update residents and obtain input.

**3. TASK DESCRIPTIONS, COST ESTIMATES, AND MEASURING PROGRESS**

**3.a. Proposed Cleanup Plan**

The goal of the cleanup plan is to remove all waste oil, asbestos-containing materials (ACM), lead-based paint (LBP), and universal and hazardous waste at the site. The material threat of future release poses a substantial risk to human health and the environment due to vandalism and proximity to the Aroostook River. A hazardous building materials survey identified approximately 11,320 gallons of waste oil and hazardous substances (diesel, lube oil, waste oil, waste oil-contaminated water, sludge, antifreeze, degreaser/solvent and water treatment chemicals) in tanks, drums, and oil-filled operational equipment at the diesel plant and outbuildings. ACM was

identified in 12,500 square feet of roofing, 1,600 square feet of window glaze, 600 square feet of floor tile, mastic and electrical wire coating and gaskets, and stored material at diesel plant and pump house. LBP was identified at the diesel plant, oil storage building, and north storage building. Identified universal and hazardous waste includes mercury-containing fixtures and components, 75 UPS batteries, 75 square feet of lead-containing glass block windows, PCB-containing ballasts, and e-waste. An engineering analysis reports that removal of asbestos roofing at the diesel plant and diesel pump house includes demolition of these structures due to the poor condition of the buildings, and quantity and type of ACM roofing. Encapsulation or removal and replacement are not feasible options due to the existing structural damage of the roofing systems at these structures. All waste oil and hazardous substances will be removed for off-site disposal by a Maine licensed Hazardous Waste Transporter in accordance with OSHA Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Management Standards and Maine Waste Oil Management Rules. Waste oil will require field testing. All ACM, LBP, universal and hazardous waste, and demolition debris will be removed for off-site disposal by a Maine licensed Asbestos Abatement Contractor, Hazardous Waste Transporter and/or demolition contractor, in accordance with OSHA General and Construction Standards, Maine Asbestos Management Regulations, and Universal Waste and Solid Waste Management Rules. Approximately 50% of the demolition debris will be reused or recycled, including brick, steel and concrete. The project is expected to take one year to complete. The City of Caribou will retain the services of a Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP) to provide cleanup oversight and technical assistance for all aspects of this project, including community engagement and participation in the-Maine Department of Environmental Protection Voluntary Response Action Program. A final Analysis of Brownfields Cleanup Alternatives, site-specific Quality Assurance Project Plan, Cleanup Plan, Health and Safety Plan, Community Relations Plan, and Remedial Report will be prepared by the QEP. Other resources/tasks necessary for success contributed by other sources include in-kind resources from the City of Caribou to complete demolition of remaining structures and restore the site for reuse. This will include grading and seeding, access road improvement, creation of an accessible parking area, signage, paths, plantings, and benches. The Riverfront Renaissance Committee will provide landscape planning and integration with the Riverfront Master Plan. Atlantic Salmon for Northern Maine will provide access to continue the walking trail to the northern extent of the city parcel.

**3.b. Description of Tasks/Activities and Outputs**

<b>Task 1: Cooperative Agreement Oversight</b>	
i.	Project Implementation: <b>EPA Funding:</b> City staff travel to National Brownfields Conference; update ACRES, Prepare bid specifications, evaluate proposals, obtain permits, progress reporting. <b>Non-EPA resources:</b> City will perform grant administration and financial management; Procure QEP; Steering committee/partner meetings;
ii.	Anticipated Project Schedule: QEP engaged /months 2-3; Bids, permits/month 6; quarterly progress reports/Steering committee; Conference August 2023
iii.	Task Lead: Caribou City Manager
iv.	Outputs: QEP procurement; quarterly progress reports/meeting minutes; ACRES updates; Conference attendance
<b>Task 2: Community Engagement</b>	

i.	Implementation: <b>EPA Funding:</b> Media consultant to assist with outreach via social media, website, survey; QEP as needed for Technical Assistance for meetings/media posts. <b>Non-EPA resources:</b> City staff will help produce media content, coordinate outreach activities, direct/oversee consultant; letters to abutting landowners, City Council and Riverfront Committee meetings for input/updates
ii.	Anticipated Project Schedule: At least twice-monthly social media/website updates; letters at beginning and end of project; monthly city committee meetings; month 6 Billboard; photo journal month 12; regular news updates
iii.	Task/Activity Lead: City Manager and Staff Coordinator
iv.	Outputs: social media/website posts; meeting minutes/attendance sheets; letters mailed; Photo journal of project; Billboard on project site; media articles
<b>Task 3: Cleanup Planning and Reporting</b>	
i.	Implementation: <b>EPA Funding:</b> Final ABCA; Health and Safety Plan (HASP); Quality Assurance Project Plan(QAPP); Community Relations Plan(CRP); Remedial Report, <b>Non-EPA resources:</b> Caribou City Staff coordination/support of QEP; Public Notifications
ii.	Anticipated Project Schedule: HASP, QAPP, CRP months 3-8; Remedial Report month 12; Public Notices months 1, 6, 12
iii.	Task/Activity Lead: QEP with coordination from City staff
iv.	Outputs: Final ABCA, HASP, QAPP, CRP; Final Remedial Report; Public Notices
<b>Task 4: Cleanup Activities</b>	
i.	Implementation: <b>EPA Funding:</b> Removal of waste oil and hazardous substances; removal of ACM, LBP, universal & hazardous waste; Maintain removal, transport and disposal records, including asbestos waste shipment records and hazardous waste manifests; demolition and site restoration. <b>Non-EPA resources:</b> Demolition of remaining site buildings; site restoration; Caribou City Staff coordination/support of QEP
ii.	Anticipated Project Schedule: Months 6-10 Removal; Months 10-12 site restoration
iii.	Task/Activity Lead: Maine Licensed Hazardous Waste Transporter; Maine Licensed Asbestos Abatement Contractor; Demolition Contractor; Coordination by QEP; City Manager
iv.	Outputs: Removal of waste oil and hazardous substances. Removal of ACM and hazardous waste. Removal, transport and disposal records. Demolition and Site restoration.

**3.c. Cost Estimates**

Budget Categories	Task (1) Cooperative Agreement Oversight	Task (2) Community Engagement	Task (3) Cleanup Planning & Reporting	Task (4) Cleanup Activities	Totals
Personnel	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
Fringe	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
Travel	\$ 5,000	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 5,000
Equipment	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
Supplies	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
Contracts	\$ 25,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 25,000	\$835,000	\$895,000

Total Direct Costs	\$ 30,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 25,000	\$835,000	\$900,000
Indirect	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
Total Federal Funding Requested	\$ 30,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 25,000	\$835,000	\$900,000

Budget Narrative:

**Task (1): Travel:** Conference: (RT airfare: \$650 x 2; 5nights hotel@ \$250+x2=~\$2500; Per diem@ \$75 x 5 x 2= \$750; Conference Registration \$225@ x 2=\$450; Total: \$5000

**Contractual:** QEP 250 hrs @ \$100/hr. = \$25,000: ACRES updates; TA/project coordination/cleanup oversight/Reporting. **Task (1) total= \$30,000**

**Task (2): Contractual:** QEP 22 hrs @ \$100/hr. = \$2,200 (~2hrs/month)

Media consultant: 120 hrs @ \$65/hr=\$7,800 (avg 10 hrs/month). **Task (2) total=\$10,000**

**Task (3): Contractual:** QEP 250 hrs @ \$100/hr = \$25,000: Final ABCA, Cleanup Plan, HASP, site-specific QAPP, Community Relations Plan, and Remedial Report. **Task (3) total= \$25,000**

**Task (4): Contractual:** Licensed Hazardous Waste Transporter (11,320gal waste oil/hazardous substances) = \$70,000/ \$120,000 if contaminated w/solvents. Licensed Abatement/Demolition Contractor (ACM:12,500sqftroof@ \$11.60sft=\$145,000; 1600sqft glazing@ \$34.375sft=\$55,000; 600sqfttile/mastic@ \$41.66sft=\$25,000; stored material, electrical wire coating and gaskets= \$35,000); LBP, universal and hazardous waste =\$25,000. Demolition/sitework =\$400,000; Total Abatement/Demo=\$685,000. QEP 300 hrs @ \$100/hr = \$30,000 **Task (4) total = \$835,000**

**3.d. Measuring Environmental Results**

Monthly meetings will be utilized to track progress, evaluate strategies and performance, coordinate tasks and schedules, and assess community outreach. Project outputs and milestones will be measured by the successful completion of EPA and Maine DEP-approved cleanup plans, including the final ABCA, cleanup plan, site-specific QAPP and CRP, and the quantity of waste oil, hazardous substances, ACM and hazardous waste removed from the site, as documented on hazardous waste manifests and asbestos waste shipment records and summarized in the remedial report. Project expenses and outcomes will be tracked, monitored and documented in quarterly financial reports and ACRES updates, including the minimized exposure to hazardous substance contamination, leveraged funding, number of acres ready for reuse, and acres of greenspace created for the community.

**4. PROGRAMMATIC CAPABILITY AND PAST PERFORMANCE**

**4.a. Programmatic Capability**

**4.a.i. Organizational Structure:** The City of Caribou, Maine, with 72 full and part-time employees, is governed by an elected City Council. The City Manager will have primary oversight of this project, collaborating with key staff to implement the EPA-approved workplan. The selected Qualified Environmental Professional will be an important part of the management team, responsible to the City Manager. Monthly progress reports will be made to City Council.

**4.a.ii Key Staff:** **Caribou City Manager, Penny Thompson**, will serve as Project Manager and have direct oversight of the program. Ms. Thompson, a 12-year city employee, and Manager since 2021, is a Certified Maine Assessor, certified in nine code enforcement disciplines. She is a member of the International City Management Association, and the International Economic Development Council. Manager Thompson maintains strong relationships with city officials and residents through her commitment to community engagement, a strong social media presence, and is initiating a resident text-notification system (TextMyGov). **Special Projects Coordinator,**

**Karen Gorman**, experienced in grant management, and community planning and outreach, will assist the Manager in project coordination and outreach. Shoreland zoning and demolition will be monitored by: 1. **Code Enforcement Officer and Zoning Administrator, Kenneth Murchison**, former Mayor and member of City Council, a Planner and GIS professional. He serves as staff to the Caribou Planning Board and Caribou Riverfront Renaissance Committee, and 2. **Building Official, Deputy Tax Assessor and Deputy Code Enforcement officer Tony Michaud**, a Certified Maine Assessor certified in all nine state code enforcement disciplines. Site reuse will be assisted by **Director of Public Works, David Ouellette**, who is solution-oriented and manages his department professionally and cost-effectively, and **Superintendent of Parks and Recreation, Gary Marquis**. **Finance Director Carl Grant** is a Certified Maine Tax Collector and Treasurer experienced in local, state and federal financial compliance and reporting.

4.a.iii. Acquiring Additional Resources: The City will augment in-house capabilities with additional expertise solicited through an RFP for a Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP). The QEP will be contracted to generate required cleanup plans and oversee remedial actions at the site. Local, state, and federal policies and procedures for legal and equitable procurement of all contractual services (cleanup, disposal, demolition, etc.) will be observed. The City will pursue an active partnership with the Brownfields Municipal Assistance Program of the University of Connecticut EPA-TAB. Current partnerships with EPA Region 1 and the Maine Department of Environmental Protection will continue to provide support and advice. Additional resources will be generated from local/regional economic development, cultural/historical, and environmental/outdoor recreation entities.

#### **4.b. Past Performance and Accomplishments**

4.b.i. Currently has or Previously Received an EPA Brownfields Grant: N/A

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

(1) Purpose and Accomplishments: Current/most recent assistance agreements: During 2018-19, Caribou received \$100,000 from the Northern Border Regional Commission (NBRC) to clean up, demolish and do site preparation at an abandoned potato processing plant identified as a brownfield. With a final project budget of \$237,308, the 26-acre site was cleaned up and has been prepared for reuse for commercial and/or industrial development. The city plans to locate its new police station complex here. Additionally, the City, through the Caribou Housing authority, annually receives major funding from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development for low-income housing assistance. In 2021 and 2020, respectively, amounts were: \$1,231,662 and \$1,459,985. These funds are administered by city staff to meet housing needs of low-income households.

(2) Compliance With Grant Requirements: All grant implementation has been conducted in compliance with budget, schedule, and reporting requirements. For both programs, an obstacle to be overcome was gaps and changes in the City Manager position. Despite lack of stability in management, City department heads and staff were able to meet grant requirements. COVID adjustments were made by replacing in-person housing reviews with a mail option. Housing staff continues to advocate for more units to meet needs. In the case of the NBRC cleanup grant, unexpected sludge and asbestos contamination were discovered, for which abatement significantly increased project costs. Despite this obstacle, staff was able to raise local in-kind and cash resources (\$137,308) to complete the project in a timely fashion.

## **City of Caribou Diesel Power Plant and Associated Outbuildings**

### **FY2023 EPA Brownfields Cleanup Grant Application**

#### **Threshold Criteria**

1. **Applicant Eligibility:** The City of Caribou is an eligible entity for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s Brownfields Cleanup Grants as a “General Purpose Unit of Local Government” under 2 CFR § 200.64.

2. **Previously Awarded Cleanup Grants:** The City of Caribou affirms that the proposed Site has not received funding from a previously awarded EPA Brownfields Cleanup Grant.

3. **Existing EPA Multipurpose Grant Funds:** The City of Caribou affirms that it does not have an open EPA Brownfields Multipurpose Grant.

4. **Site Ownership:** The City of Caribou became the sole owner of the subject site through the automatic lien foreclosure process on November 15, 2019, and will retain ownership of the site for the duration of the grant period.

5. **Basic Site Information:** Caribou Diesel Electric Power Plant and Associated Outbuildings  
142 Lower Lyndon St.  
Caribou, Maine 04736  
  
Current Owner: City of Caribou, Maine

#### **6. Status and History of Contamination at the Site:**

- a. Contamination at the site: The site is contaminated by hazardous substances.
- b. Operational history and current use(s) of the site: The site (3.2 acres) consists of an abandoned diesel electric power plant and associated outbuildings on the Aroostook River near the historic Caribou dam (circa 1889). The 12,200-square foot diesel plant was constructed in 1949 and operated by Maine Public Service (1943 – 1999) and PDI New England (1999 – 2013). The diesel plant was deactivated in 2012 and the site was acquired by Merlin One in 2013. The site has been vacant for several years and the buildings are in poor repair. The City of Caribou acquired the site in 2019 through automatic lien foreclosure. City efforts to secure the site and repeated patrols have not deterred trespassers from vandalism and other criminal activities.
- c. Environmental concerns at the site: The environmental concerns at the site are waste oil, hazardous substances, asbestos-containing materials (ACM), lead-based paint (LBP), universal and hazardous waste. A hazardous building materials survey was completed on May 8, 2022. Approximately 11,320 gallons of waste oil and hazardous substances were inventoried at the site, including stored diesel, lube oil, waste oil, waste oil-contaminated water, sludge, antifreeze, degreaser/solvent, and water treatment chemicals. ACM was

identified at the site in roofing (12,500 square feet), window glaze (1,600 square feet), floor tile and mastic (600 square feet), and stored material (white board insulation). Electrical wire coating and gaskets were presumed positive for asbestos. LBP, universal and hazardous waste was identified at the site, including mercury-containing fixtures and components, UPS batteries (75), potential lead-containing glass block windows (575 square feet), potential PCB-containing ballasts, and e-waste.

- d. How the site became contaminated and the nature and extent of the contamination: The site became contaminated due to activities performed at the site prior to deactivation of the diesel plant in 2012, change of ownership in 2013 and prolonged vacancy prior to foreclosure in 2019. Contamination at the site consists of waste oil, hazardous substances, ACM, LBP, universal and hazardous waste at site buildings. The extent of contamination is presently contained to tanks, drums, containers, oil-filled operational equipment, building materials, stored materials, painted surfaces, fixtures and components. Contamination at the site poses a substantial risk to human health and the environment due to vandalism and proximity to the Aroostook River.

**7. Brownfields Site Definition:** The City of Caribou affirms that the Site meets the definition of a brownfield under CERCLA § 101(39) as described in the Information on Sites Eligible for Brownfields. Funding under CERCLA § 104(k): The City of Caribou affirms that the Site:

- a. Is not listed (or proposed for listing) on the National Priorities List (NPL).
- b. Is not subject to unilateral administrative orders, court orders, administrative orders on consent, or judicial consent decrease issued to or entered into by parties under CERCLA
- c. Is not subject to the jurisdiction, custody, or control of the U.S. government.

#### **8. Description of Environmental Assessment Conducted:**

A Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) was completed at the site on August 5, 2021 in accordance with ASTM International Standard Practice E1527-13 through the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Municipal Brownfields Site Assessment Program. A site-specific quality assurance project plan (QAPP) addendum was prepared on October 2, 2021 and approved by Maine DEP. A hazardous building materials survey was completed at the site on May 8, 2022 through the Maine DEP Municipal Brownfields Site Assessment Program, including an asbestos identification survey, LBP screening, universal and hazardous waste inventory. A Phase II ESA was completed at the site on May 14, 2022 in accordance with ASTM International Standard E1903-19 through the Maine DEP Municipal Brownfields Site Assessment Program, including sixteen soil samples, six groundwater samples and three porewater samples. Petroleum and hazardous substances were detected in site soils, but below regulatory guidelines.

#### **9. Site Characterization**

- a. N/A
- b. The proposed site is eligible to be enrolled in a voluntary response program. A current letter from the appropriate State Environmental Authority is attached that:



- i. Affirms the site is eligible to be enrolled in the state voluntary response program;
  - ii. Indicates the site is not currently enrolled, but intends to be enrolled, in the state voluntary response program; and
  - iii. Indicates there is a sufficient level of site characterization from the environmental site assessment performed to date for the remediation work to begin on the site.
- c. N/A

## **10. Enforcement or Other Actions**

The City of Caribou affirms there are no known ongoing or anticipated environmental enforcement action or other actions related to the site for which Brownfields Grant funding is sought.

## **11. Sites Requiring a Property-Specific Determination**

The City of Caribou affirms the site does not need a property-specific determination from EPA to be eligible for Brownfields Grant funding.

## **12. Threshold Criteria Related to CERCLA/Petroleum Liability**

### **a. Property Ownership Eligibility – Hazardous Substance Sites**

#### **i. Exemptions to CERCLA Liability**

1. N/A

2. N/A

3. As a local unit of government that acquired ownership of the property through tax delinquency or abandonment and did not cause or contribute to the release or threatened release of a hazardous substance at the property, the City of Caribou is exempt from CERCLA liability for any previous contamination at the property.

- a. The diesel plant was deactivated in 2012 and the property was acquired by Merlin One in 2013. Following years of vacancy, the property was abandoned in 2017. The City of Caribou filed tax lien certificates on the property with the Southern Aroostook Registry of Deeds on May 18, 2018 for unpaid 2017 taxes (Book 5774, Page 265) and May 24, 2019 for unpaid 2018 taxes (Book 5893, Page 242). The City of Caribou acquired the property on November 15, 2019 through automatic lien foreclosure on the unpaid 2017 taxes.
- b. The property was acquired by the City of Caribou on November 15, 2019.
- c. All disposal of hazardous substances at the site occurred before the City of Caribou acquired the property.
- d. The City of Caribou affirms it has not caused or contributed to any release of hazardous substances at the property.

- e. The City of Caribou affirms that it has not, at any time, arranged for the disposal of hazardous substances at the site or transported hazardous substances to the site.
- b. Property Ownership Eligibility – Hazardous Substance Sites  
N/A

### **13. Cleanup Authority and Oversight Structure**

The City of Caribou will comply with all applicable federal and state laws that ensure that each cleanup project protects human health and the environment.

- a. The City of Caribou will procure a Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP) to oversee the cleanup at the site and plans to enroll in the Maine DEP Voluntary Response Action Program (VRAP). The City of Caribou will comply with the competitive procurement provisions in 2 CFR §§ 200.317 through 200.327 by public advertising, documented procedures and other formal procurement methods for requests for bids, proposals or qualification statements. The QEP will provide technical assistance to the City for the duration of the Cooperative Agreement, as well as for the Community Engagement process. The QEP will oversee cleanup planning and remedial activities at the site in coordination with EPA Brownfields and Maine DEP VRAP, Brownfields, Response Services, Waste Oil, Asbestos, Lead, Universal Waste, Hazardous Waste, and Solid Waste programs.
- b. Potential impacts to the adjacent electrical switch station owned by Versant Power necessary to conduct cleanup at the diesel plant and diesel pump house have been considered by the City and Versant prior to this application. Versant Power and the City of Caribou affirm they are committed to cooperate for the safety and success of this cleanup project. The City of Caribou will seek access agreements with adjacent property owners and assist with cleanup planning and implementation of site security and safety measures. The QEP will coordinate all cleanup planning and remedial activities with adjacent property owners and secure all necessary permits, permissions and approvals to work near the electrical switch station.

### **14. Community Notification**

The City of Caribou provided ample notice to the community of its intent to apply for an EPA Brownfields Cleanup Grant and allowed the community an opportunity to comment on the draft application.

#### **a. Draft Analysis of Brownfield Cleanup Alternatives**

The City of Caribou provided the community an opportunity to review and comment on the draft application and draft ABCA from November 6, 2022 through November 21, 2022. If the application is selected for funding, the City will finalize the ABCA and make it available for additional public review and comment as part of pre-cleanup activities.

#### **b. Community Notification Ad**

The City of Caribou notified the community with its intent to apply for an EPA Brownfields Cleanup Grant through a Legal Notice published in the Aroostook Republican newspaper in the

October 26, 2022 and November 2, 2022 editions and posted in the City Clerk's office on October 26, 2022. Concurrently, the notice was posted on the home page and events page of the City's website ([www.cariboumaine.org](http://www.cariboumaine.org)), [cariboumaine.org/grants](http://cariboumaine.org/grants), and the City of Caribou Facebook page on November 7, 2022. The notice was mailed to adjacent landowners on October 31, 2022 and emailed to City boards and commissions, November 7, 2022. Content of the notices clearly stated: that a copy of the grant application including the draft ABCA was available for review and public comment; how to comment on the draft application; where the draft application was located; and the date, time, and location of the public meeting.

c. Public Meeting

A Public Meeting was held on November 14, 2022, at 6:00 p.m. during a regular meeting of the Caribou City Council. The draft application and draft ABCA were presented and comments and questions were solicited from community members. The meeting was recorded and uploaded to the City YouTube channel, and linked by Facebook post, for later viewing and to garner additional feedback. The community demonstrated full support and enthusiasm for the project, as seen in attached documentation.

d. Community Notification Documents

The items listed below are attached to the application submitted to EPA:

- A copy of the draft ABCA
- A copy of the newspaper ad that demonstrates solicitation for comments on the application and that notification to the public occurred at least 14 calendar days before the application was submitted to EPA.
- Screenshots of City of Caribou webpage and Facebook posts
- The comments received;
- The applicant's response to those public comments;
- Meeting notes or summary from the public meeting; and
- Meeting sign-in sheet/participant list.

**15. Contractors and Named Subrecipients:**

Contractors: N/A

Named Subrecipients: N/A