

**Resurgence of Western Maine's Economy Attributable to
Brownfields Reuse**

APPLICANT INFORMATION:

- A. Applicant identification:** Androscoggin Valley Council of Governments (AVCOG)
125 Manley Road
Auburn, Maine 04210
- B. Grant Type:** Community Wide, Hazardous Substance Brownfields Assessment Grant
- C. Total Dollar Amount Requested for this Grant:** \$200,000
- D. Project Contact:** Janet Pelletier – Community/Environmental Planner
125 Manley Road
Auburn, ME 04210
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- E. Chief Executive:** Robert J. Thompson
125 Manley Road
Auburn, ME 04210
Telephone: (207)-783-9186
Fax: (207)-783-5211
{ HYPERLINK "mailto:thompson@avcog.org" }
- F. Date Submitted:** October 12, 2007
- G. Project Period:** Three years
- H. Location:**
The proposed area to serve consists of: Androscoggin, Franklin and Oxford counties. Our tri-county, non-coastal, western mountains region is comprised of 72 municipalities.

Androscoggin County
Elmer Berry
2 Turner Street
Auburn, ME 04210
Tel: 207-784-8390
Fax: 207-782-5367

Franklin County
Meldon Gilmore
140 Main Street
Farmington, ME 04938
Tel: 207-778-6614
Fax: 207-778-5899

Oxford County
Steven Merrill
26 Western Avenue
South Paris, ME 04281
Tel: 207-743-6359
Fax: 207-743-1545

I. Population:

Based on the 2000 Census, the population of the tri-county area is 188,015. The neighboring sister cities of Lewiston and Auburn make up the largest population center of Western Maine with a combined population of 58,893. Both cities have Brownfields programs; the population of the remaining communities is 129,122.

J. Special Consideration:

Western Maine has long been dependent on manufacturing for a strong economy and jobs. Due to this reliance, the area has been more adversely impacted than the rest of Maine by the decline of manufacturing during the past several decades. This is evidenced by three declarations of Sudden and Severe Economic Dislocation by the Economic Development Administration; these declarations were in 1991 for the three-county area, in June 1997 for Androscoggin and Oxford counties, and in October 1998 for Franklin County.

The Maine Small Business Administration has designated Franklin, Oxford, and part of Androscoggin counties as Historically Underutilized Business Zones. All of these areas qualified because of high unemployment rates.

K. Cooperative Partners:

Company	Name	Telephone
Androscoggin County Chamber Of Commerce	Chip Morrison	783-2249
Bethel Area Chamber Of Commerce	Robin Zinchuk	824-2282
Franklin County Chamber Of Commerce	Lorna Nichols	778-4215
Western Maine Community Action Group	Fen Fowler	645-3764
Greater Franklin Development Corporation	Alison Hagerstrom	778-5887
Growth Council of Oxford Hills	John Shattuck	743-8830
Lewiston-Auburn Economic Growth Council	Lucien Gosselin	784-0161
Oxford Hills Chamber Of Commerce	Kelsey Jewell	743-2281
Rangeley Lakes Region Chamber Of Commerce	Evelyn McAllister	1-800-685-2537
River Valley Chamber Of Commerce	Kristy White	364-3241
Western Mountains Alliance	Tanya Swain	778-7274
Healthy Androscoggin	Angela Westhoff	795-5990
American Cancer Society	Bonnie Bickford	373-3729
City of Auburn	Roland Miller	333-6600
River Valley Healthy Communities Coalition	Patricia Duguay	364-7408
Maine Bureau of Health	Anita Huff	287-5358
River Valley Growth Council	Diane Ray	369-0396
Flagstaff Area Business Association	Diane Nielsen	670-3009
City of Lewiston	Alison Stone	784-2951

THRESHOLD CRITERIA:

A. Applicant Eligibility: AVCOG is a quasi municipal, non-profit Council of Governments (Attachment A).

B. Letter from the Maine Department of Environmental Protection. See Attachment B.

RANKING CRITERIA:

A. Assessment Grant Proposal Budget:

1. Table 1: Project Tasks and Budget

	TASK 1	TASK 2	TASK 3	TASK 4	TASK 5	TOTAL
Budget Categories	Steering Committee/Conference/Community Participation	Inventory	RFP/Consultant Selection	Phase I SA	Phase II SA	
Personnel	5,000	5,000	2,000	18,500	17,500	48,000
Fringe	1,450	1,450	580	5,365	5,075	13,920
Travel	2,500	650		500	550	4,200
Supplies		250	100	50	50	450
Contractual				32,107	101,323	133,430
Other						
Total	8,950	7,350	2,680	56,522	124,498	200,000

2. Task Descriptions:

Task 1 –Steering Committee, Conference, and Community Participation:

AVCOG will draw heavily on our existing volunteer Brownfields Steering Committee, a group consisting of municipal officers, town managers, residents, a banker, an attorney, and business people; We will also continue to recruit new members, as needed to ensure diverse membership. AVCOG will prepare agendas and minutes and moderate Steering Committee meetings in a manner designed to ensure fairness in selection of sites for Phase I and Phase II Assessments. This task also includes attending the annual brownfields conference and pertinent informational meetings. Community participation will start upon receiving the grant and be ongoing throughout the program. Initial Community participation work will ensure that the public has the opportunity to provide input in the inventory and assessment process. Other tasks each contain funds and activities for Community Participation.

Task 2 – Brownfields Inventory:

AVCOG staff, with earlier EPA Brownfields Assessment funds, developed a brownfields inventory, with the assistance of municipal officials and business interests, for our three-county region. However, we continue to find additional sites and add these to our inventory as information becomes available. AVCOG has a well-developed Geographic Information System (GIS); additional work to the brownfields site inventory will include a detailed geodatabase with location, ownership, value, land use history, and zoning.

Task 3 – RFP Preparation/Consultant Selection:

AVCOG staff will prepare a request for proposals for consultant services to complete Phase I and Phase II Site Assessments. The AVCOG staff and Steering Committee will review the proposals, schedule and conduct interviews, and select a consultant.

Task 4 – Phase I Site Assessments:

We anticipate that six Phase I Site Assessments will be completed. All site assessments will be in accordance with ASTM E1527-05 standard and conducted by a qualified engineering or geotechnical firm selected during Task 3. AVCOG will draft an agreement for owners to sign, acknowledging the program and their involvement. AVCOG staff, with the help of the selected

Consultant, expects to spend a considerable amount of time working with owners. Time will be spent meeting with owners, educating them on the program both verbally and through informational handouts, and developing an overall close rapport. AVCOG staff will assist the consultant with contacts, site access, and available data and information. Staff will participate in the site visits and provide oversight to the Phase I process. Staff will also evaluate likely site uses and determine needed ordinance changes and other town actions to facilitate such uses. Staff will then work with town officials to facilitate site redevelopment. At the completion of Phase I site assessments, AVCOG will work in conjunction with town officials where the sites are located to arrange for informational public meetings and solicit public feedback on environmental and health concerns and potential site uses.

Task 5 – Phase II Site Assessments/Cleanup Plans:

We anticipate that three Phase II Site Assessments will be completed. All site assessments will be in accordance with ASTM E1903-97, and conducted by a qualified consultant selected during Task 3. AVCOG staff will continue to assist the consultant with contacts, owner relations, site access, and available data and information. Staff will provide oversight to the Phase II process. All Phase II site assessments will include clean up plans, if necessary, based on the most likely uses of the specific properties. Clean up plans will be developed in consultation with the Maine Voluntary Response Action Program. At the completion of Phase II site assessments a final public hearing will be held. We will review the findings and the proposed cleanup process, and solicit public input including reuse concepts and integration of uses into the community. Staff will continue to work with owners and municipalities on redevelopment concepts and financing.

B. Community Need

1. Description of Target Region/Community

The tri-county area of Western Maine, consisting of 2 cities, 64 towns, 6 plantations and a large amount of unorganized area encompassing 4,246 square miles, is the overall target area. By the late 19th Century, Western Maine was a notable area for manufacturing. Auburn and Lewiston, being the primary cities, were major employment hubs specializing in shoes and textiles respectively. Many towns in the region such as Mechanic Falls, Rumford, Mexico, Livermore Falls and Jay specialized in pulp and paper manufacturing based on their prime locations to needed raw materials and water power. Several additional towns had wood manufacturers including Bethel, Livermore Falls, Norway, Paris, Kingfield, Strong, New Vineyard, and Farmington. The economic prosperity of the many mill towns continued through the 1960's.

A decline started in the 1970's, and the economy has changed dramatically for the tri-county area in the last several decades. Data from the United States Census indicates that during the 10 year period from 1990 through 2000, 4,715 manufacturing jobs in the region were lost, and between 1980 and 2000 there were 10,760 manufacturing jobs lost.

Within the Western Maine tri county area, 44 municipalities have household incomes below the state median household income (\$37,335: 2000 U.S. Census), and 12 of those have median household incomes less than 80% of the state's. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, Maine median household income is \$4,659 below the National of \$41,994.

An example of a town which would benefit from being part of Brownfields Assessment Grant funding is Livermore Falls, located in northern Androscoggin County; it is a perfect example of a town which is shadowed by its history. During the height of the Industrial Revolution in the late 1800s, Livermore Falls was bustling with mills of all sizes. Dotted among the landscape were gristmills, sawmills, logging and lumber mills, shoe factories, and paper mills which were operated by water power from the Androscoggin River. The economy has changed dramatically for Livermore Falls in the last several decades. Data from the United States Census indicates that during the 10 year period from 1990 through 2000, 219 manufacturing jobs in the town were

lost, a decline of 42%. From 1980 through 2000, 430 manufacturing jobs were lost indicating a 59% decline.

Although most of the heavy industry has left, the town is still steeped with imagery of the railroad, papermaking, lumber and logging successes of the past. The town has a population of 3,227 with a minor service center/downtown business district. The median household income is \$30,102. There are 13.2% of families below the poverty line with 15.7% of the total population below the poverty line. Over half (56%) of the towns population is considered low and moderate income, thereby, qualifying it for Community Development Block Grant funding.

Livermore Falls struggles economically; nonetheless, it has a very strong and supportive community of people with passion for making it a more vibrant and inclusive place to live. There is a downtown betterment group made up of dedicated individuals who work towards a more positive environment. They support the town through cleanup and plantings and park and trail development, and they bolster civic pride through presenting a designated history night.

The town is also a Square One Community which is part of a new initiative from the Maine Downtown Center, a program of the Maine Development Foundation. As such, they participate in trainings and workshops and organize around Main Street Maine principles. Town volunteers have also established "Adopt a Spot," responsible for improving aesthetics in the community through various plantings and litter cleanup.

Another example of a community which would benefit from an Assessment Grant is the town of Strong with a population base of 1,259 (U.S. Census, 2000). Known as the "toothpick capital of the world," Strong was once a flourishing community with four significant wood mills in its immediate downtown, all of which are currently idle.

Environmentally, the fact that all four mills were running decades before environmental regulations were put in place leads to the questions and concerns that contamination is probable. Many households are commingled with the mills in the immediate vicinity of the downtown creating a potential threatening environment. Additionally, within the community's downtown is an industrial landfill from one of the currently unused industrial buildings which poses potential environmental justice issues to nearby low-income residents.

Based on U.S. Census data, the town of Strong has 492 households and 343 families. Nine percent of families live below the poverty level. There is a workforce of 563 with a median household income of \$30,568, well below Maine's median household income. The unemployment rate in Strong is 5.9%. Currently 77.1% of the workforce travels more than 30 minutes to find employment. A number of families have moved elsewhere to seek employment.

Transitioning to new jobs has been difficult for many people throughout the region. Many area residents do not have the education or skills for higher level service and professional jobs; jobs that they are qualified for, such as service jobs, often are part-time, have few benefits and have low hourly wages (Attachment C). Access to educational opportunities is limited, especially in remote sections of Franklin County and Oxford County.

2. How will the Target Region/Community Benefit

Many communities throughout the region have old mill sites and struggle with high unemployment rates, low and moderate incomes, and significant losses in manufacturing; all could benefit by receiving Brownfields Assessments. Based on the potential environmental concerns at old industrial sites and the loss in employment opportunities from the mill closures, the towns of Livermore Falls and Strong, which mimic many in our region, would benefit by having mill sites assessed for potential environmental contamination. Identifying hazards, developing a clean-up plan and involving municipal officials and the public in establishing a vision and potential uses for sites can serve as a catalyst to action. Resue will create attractive locations for new businesses, create new jobs, reduce sprawl, and lift community spirit.

3. Impact of Brownfields on Target Region/Community

Approximately 50 unused industrial sites, of varying sizes, dot the Western Maine region. As these mill sites sit vacant and unused, residents develop beliefs that these sites are contaminated and pose a host of dangers. Examples include an industrial landfill in Strong, and tannery lagoons in Wilton; they are obvious potential hazards to human health and the environment and evoke bad imagery of industrial sites. With potential contamination at these mill sites, it is important to establish if they pose a threat to nearby residents or the environment and to develop plans for clean-up and to put them back into commercial reuse or community green space.

Brownfield sites are negatively impacting our communities in a number of ways. Vacant mill buildings are blighted and invite illegal dumping and vandalism. Property owners are afraid or unwilling to sell contaminated properties, thus negatively impacting the tax base. Unaddressed contamination may continue to migrate and impact the health and wellbeing of the community, and investment will seek opportunity elsewhere or into more rural areas.

As a result, unremediated brownfields contribute to sprawl. The consequences of sprawl include the increased reliance on motor vehicle transportation and increased commuting distances, declining populations in urban centers, unused infrastructure and the need to increase infrastructure outside of the urban centers. The redevelopment of Brownfield sites in or near downtowns will assist in controlling sprawl.

C. Site Selection Process

1. Site Selection Criteria

AVCOG and the Steering Committee will review existing criteria from prior Brownfields Grant work and modify the criteria as needed based on past experience and consultant and Department of Environmental Protection input. Each selection criteria will have a number value; the sites which have the highest overall value based on the applied criteria will advance to Phase I.

Basic criteria will include that the property is located within the Western Maine region target area and that the site qualifies for EPA assessment funds. Additional criteria may include: owner willingness; overall site development potential; potential return on investment through job creation, increased tax base, and/or additional economic stimulation; probability for risks to human health and the environment; and whether site development will reduce sprawl or increase green/open space.

2. Inventory activities, prioritization efforts, or other activities

During our prior Brownfields grant program (fiscal year 2005) staff and the Brownfields Steering Committee developed an inventory of potential Brownfields sites using a variety of input from town and state officials and the public. The inventory was updated during the program. As the program received more publicity with the Phase I and Phase II activities, municipal officials helped identify additional sites. Staff also used, and will continue to use, the

local media, and the Androscoggin Valley Council of Governments newsletter and web site to obtain assistance from the public in updating the inventory; we have a history of success with the media, especially the regional newspaper, the Sun-Journal, and various local cable television stations. A significant effort will be made to identify additional sites through town involvement and the use of the media. We will update and improve the geodatabase of the inventory.

3. Assessment of Privately Owned Land

Private property owners will be mailed a letter explaining the Androscoggin Valley Council of Government's potential interest in assessing their site. Attached will be the EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant announcement and an accompanying brochure from the Maine Department of Environmental Protection titled, "Site Investigation Matters, Taking the Mystery out of Dealing with Contaminated Property in Maine." The mailings will emphasize the benefits of being in the Program and that Assessment activities require site access; therefore, written approval will be required.

AVCOG anticipates working closely with property owners to gain unrestricted access to sites. Should a listed property actually be "abandoned" with no taxes paid for several years yet not foreclosed on by the town, a determination will be made by the Steering Committee in conjunction with the affected town as to how to proceed. The town may choose to foreclose. Alternatively, the committee may decide to make a concerted effort to contact the owner and seek written permission for access and a release of liability, or the committee may decide not to proceed with the site. The inventory from our existing program indicates there are enough sites in the region needing assessment so that the program will not be adversely affected by the fact that access may not be available at all locations.

D. Sustainable Reuse of Brownfields

1. Prevent Pollution and Reduce Resource Consumption

The Maine Department of Environmental Protection has an active pollution prevention program. Through previous Environmental Justice grants, the Androscoggin Valley Council of Governments has worked with many businesses in our region to reduce use of hazardous chemicals and to manage their wastes in an environmentally sound manner. Using this grant, the Androscoggin Valley Council of Governments, in coordination with the Maine Department of Environmental Protection pollution prevention program, will assist applicable Phase I and Phase II property owners and potential developers in implementing pollution prevention practices.

Additionally, focus will be placed on reuse of sites which are located in or near downtowns and where there is existing infrastructure in place. Reuse of such sites helps fight sprawl and keeps economic activity in original economic centers. Reuse will help to energize centers which have been slowly declining for the past two to three decades and will encourage other businesses to locate in downtown centers.

2. Promote Economic Benefits

The Androscoggin Valley Council of Governments feels it is essential to the development and reuse of Brownfields sites that we offer widespread awareness and education throughout our communities with particular focus on the business community. Information will include the benefits of identifying and eliminating hazardous materials, reusing sites and forming public and private partnerships to achieve such goals. By creating awareness amongst businesses and communities, it becomes clear that "win-win" situations can be created for both groups; businesses reduce their environmental liability, and have a greater ability to market their property whereas communities improve their tax base, and generate much needed jobs in their community. The economic potential of sites will weigh heavily in the prioritization process.

3. Promote a Vibrant Community

Through the brownfields assessment program, and further Brownfields reuse, we will promote the principles of smart growth to local communities. Reuse will reduce sprawl, improve the quality of life and health, improve the area economics, and create a cleaner and safer environment. Reuse will strengthen and direct development within existing downtown centers, encourage community and stakeholder collaboration; and help to foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place. Redevelopment of Brownfields will encourage mixed uses where people both live and work and which create affordable and walkable communities.

Along with offering reuse incentives, we will encourage municipalities to consider zoning changes, waivers of maximum impervious area allowed on redeveloped sites, upgrade infrastructure, and establish buffer requirements, as needed. We will work to leverage grant and other funds to accomplish broader community planning in order to integrate brownfields with adjacent neighborhoods. Approvals would be contingent upon deed restrictions and establishment of long-term maintenance funds or agreements of preservation.

E. Creation and/or Preservation of Greenspace/Open Space or Nonprofit Purpose

The Androscoggin Valley Council of Governments will work with municipalities, local development groups, and land trusts to encourage businesses to reuse existing buildings and sites, thereby preserving land that can be made available for recreation and community greenspace or open space needed for necessary future development. Some communities may also benefit by the creation of open space either within their downtowns or in other locations such as along rivers or streams that were once used by the old mills. This will also be considered as part of the prioritization process.

Consideration will be given to the site geography, topography, and local needs, where appropriate public use such as a walking or biking trail, ball fields, parks, and open space will be considered. Some suspected brownfields may connect to existing or proposed trail systems; these opportunities will be investigated. We will work with municipalities and owners towards potential shared use agreements.

Site selection and follow-up work will also consider the potential to reuse for non-profit purposes, whether it be as greenspace or for expansion of facilities used by non-profit agencies. Potential uses could include low income housing, shared office space for small non-profits, or incubator style business use for low income entrepreneurs.

F. Pre-Award Community Notification

1. Notification of Proposed Plans

Upon receiving the award, the Androscoggin Valley Council of Governments will notify the local and regional newspapers and cable access television. News of the award, a copy of the application, and the date of a public hearing will be posted on the Androscoggin Valley Council of Governments website ({ HYPERLINK "http://www.avcog.org" }), and information will be included in our newsletter. The partners who produce newsletters for their organizations will be asked to include news of the award and public hearing in their publications. This will help to ensure that businesses, residents, and environmental audiences are informed. Notice of the public hearing will also be placed in town offices, local libraries, select small businesses, and chambers of commerce, and on local cable access stations and regional newspapers. All public comments can be sent directly to the Androscoggin Valley Council of Governments via our website, direct e-mail, regular mail or telephone conversation. The public hearing will provide a question and answer component to solicit public input.

2. Why the Notification Method is the Most Appropriate

The means of notification listed above, based on feedback from communities, was successful for our previous grant, and we feel it will continue to be the best possible approach to reach the residents and businesses in our region of Western Maine. Since not all methods of communication are available to all residents, the diverse methods will assure at least one means of obtaining the information, whether through verbal, written, or electronic exchange.

Communities that will be dealing directly with the Brownfields program will be targeted with local cable access and local newspapers, where available. Regional newspapers will offer information and education of Brownfields activities to residents that otherwise may never hear of Brownfields. The Androscoggin Valley Council of Governments newsletter is distributed to a number of municipal officials in each of the municipalities in the region.

3. How long is the Comment Period and what are the Forms of Outreach

We will host a month long initial comment period to educate the public of our awarded Brownfields Assessment grant and upcoming work. During this time we will use the above outlined methods to inform the public and encourage commentary and involvement.

4. How will Comments be Addressed

All comments will be recorded and reviewed. Responses to commentary will be through the same means of correspondence as we received the initial question or comment. If comments are received at a public hearing, there will be an immediate response from the consultant or staff. We will follow-up with written responses as needed. Input received at public hearings will become part of the written record. Notes will be maintained of both verbal comments and responses. Input and responses will be a matter of public record and be available upon request.

G. Ongoing Community Involvement

1. Involvement of Targeted Community

Having received Brownfields Assessment funding for the fiscal year 2005 Brownfields grant, we have been publicizing the Brownfields program for two years. This has helped educate the public and create an identifiable presence throughout our region. Staff will continue to use various media sources, the agency's web site: { HYPERLINK "http://www.avcog.org" }, and the agency's newsletter to invite the public to participate in the brownfields program. For Phase I and Phase II communities, information on meetings and program progress will be provided through local newspapers, local public access cable stations, municipal and partner websites, newsletters, and posters displayed in public spaces around town and at the site. Comments from the public will be accepted throughout the process, but more formal public meetings will be held at the completion of the Phase I and Phase II processes. We will solicit input at the meetings and hold the public comment period for each site open for three additional weeks. Public meetings will be designed to answer questions and to solicit public input and involve participants in "brainstorming" potential uses and integration into the neighborhood and community. Meeting notes will be included as a Appendix t the Phase I and II reports.

2. Partnerships

Androscoggin Valley Council of Governments has developed many partnerships over its 40-year history. Forty-five municipalities are members of our organization. Many municipalities have representatives on our Executive Board and/or other committees. We work extensively with other development organizations and the Chambers of Commerce in the region. We have been, and plan to continue speaking about the brownfields effort at Chamber meetings, service clubs, and other partner organizations throughout the grant period.

We will collaborate with municipalities on community involvement efforts and their interest in reuse of local Brownfields sites. It will be crucial for communities to be dedicated to helping site owners envision and implement desired site uses. We will work with partners having finance mechanisms to ensure the best chance for redevelopment. Municipalities will be encouraged to assist with needed financing of property development through Tax Increment Financing and Pine Tree Zones designation (special state tax incentive program) whenever possible.

Additionally, we will continue to work with and receive assistance from the Maine Department of Environmental Protection's pollution prevention and Brownfields programs. We will continue a close relationship with the Maine Voluntary Response Action Program. We anticipate that the sites that are selected for assessment will successfully enter into the Voluntary Response Action Program and receive clearance for certain development.

3. Plans for Communicating Progress

A summary of the Brownfields progress will be placed on our website. Partners will be asked to include progress information in their newsletters. Press releases will be submitted to the local newspapers and cable access. The Somali and Hispanic population within the region will be informed of activities by a notice and option to contact staff for an interpreter for an opportunity to ask questions.

As noted, we will hold public meetings during both Phase I and II in each community having a site. We will also place copies of Phase I and Phase II site assessments at the appropriate town offices, libraries, and on the AVCOG web site, as well as develop links on municipal websites. We will use the same types of notification procedures as detailed previously and will provide copies of data and information on request. However, sensitive business information may not be shared.

4. List of Community-Based Organizations

The following are partnership organizations/companies along with their appropriate contact information in the AVCOG region.

Company	Activities	Name	Telephone
Androscoggin County Chamber Of Commerce	Non-profit supports the business community and area economic vitality	Charles Morrison	207-783-2249
Bethel Area Chamber Of Commerce	Non-profit supports the business community and area economic vitality	Robin Zinchuk	207-824-2282
Franklin County Chamber Of Commerce	Non-profit supports the business community and area economic vitality	Lorna Nichols	207-778-4215
Western Maine Community Action Group	Assists in promoting self sufficiency and independence of people	Fenwick Fowler	1-800-645-9636
Greater Franklin Development Corporation	Non-profit organization fostering existing businesses and encouraging new business start-ups	Alison Hagerstrom	207-778-5887
Growth Council of Oxford Hills	Non-profit organizations dedicated to creating economic opportunity and enhancing quality of life in rural Western Maine	John Shattuck	207-743-8830
Lewiston-Auburn Economic Growth Council	Economic development agency for Lewiston-Auburn offering services such as technical assistance, commercial financing,, and marketing	Lucien Gosselin	207-784-0161
Oxford Hills Chamber of Commerce	Non-profit supports the business community and area economic vitality	Kelsey Jewell	207-743-2281
Rangeley Lakes Chamber Of Commerce	Non-profit supports the business community and area economic vitality	Evelyn McAllister	1-800-685-2537
River Valley Healthy Communities Coalition	Non-profit organization working to make a difference in the health and well-being of communities	Patty Duguay	207-364-7408
River Valley Chamber of Commerce	Non-profit supports the business community and area economic vitality	Kristy White	207-364-3241
Western Mountains Alliance	Promoting sustainable communities and economic development in Western Maine	Tanya Swain	207-778-3885
Healthy Androscoggin	Community coalition dedicated to improving the health of Androscoggin County citizens through a comprehensive community based approach	Angela Westhoff	207-795-5990
American Cancer Society	Provides programs aimed at reducing the risk of cancer, detecting cancer, ensuring proper treatment, and empowering people to maintain the highest possible quality of life	Bonnie Bickford	207-373-3700
Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention	Develop and deliver services to preserve, protect and promote the health and well-being of the citizens of Maine	Chris Zukas-Lessard	207-287-8016
Empower Lewiston Enterprise Community	Strives to balance economic and community development through partnerships and community involvement	Alyson Stone	207-777-7144

H. Reduction of Threats to Human Health and the Environment

1. Use of Funds to Identify and Reduce Threats to Human Health and the Environment.

AVCOG will use the grant funds solely for the identification and reduction of environmental threats to human health and the environment. Our current Brownfield inventory contains a number of abandoned or underutilized industrial sites, which have not been investigated and are located adjacent to surface water bodies or residential areas. This grant will help determine if these sites pose an environmental threat to human health or the environment by completing Phase I and Phase II assessments. These identified sites include tanneries, plastics manufacturing, and shoe and wood products manufacturing. Potential contamination based on historical sites uses include solvents, petroleum products, chromium sludge, plasticizers, glues, dyes, paints, varnishes, and lacquers and as well as a host of additional potential contaminants. Assessing these sites will enable identification of possible contamination and exposure pathways and allow sustainable cleanup and redevelopment. To protect human health and the environment, the contaminants of concern must first be identified. Second, the sensitive receptors, which may be dependent on the proposed use, must be identified. The third step is to identify the exposure pathways between the contaminants of concern and the sensitive receptors including ingestion, dermal exposure, and inhalation. The final step is to determine potential future land use and prepare a cleanup plan, with the Maine Department of Environmental Protection Agency, that reduces the threats by controlling the identified exposure pathways.

For example contaminants of concern associated with an abandoned tannery typically include chromium, associated solvents, and petroleum. The sensitive receptors include any surrounding residential population, trespassers and children playing on the property, and the surrounding environment including surface water bodies and groundwater. Trespassers' and children may be exposed to contaminated soil through dermal contact, inhalation of dust, and ingestion by not washing before eating. Other populations can be exposed through drinking or contacting contaminated ground or surface water or eating contaminated fish. The associated contaminants are threats because they are known carcinogens and dermal irritants. To fully understand and control the exposure pathways, how a contaminant behaves in the environment must be known. For example: Is a contaminant heavier than water? Will it sink or float on water? Is it soluble in water and be easily transported? Does it adhere strongly to soil and not migrate?. This is accomplished by conducting a fate and transport investigation of the identified contaminants during the Phase II assessment. This information is extremely important in determining how to develop a sustainable cleanup plan that protects human health and the environment. These plans are developed in cooperation with the Maine DEP Voluntary Response Action Program.

The goal of the Voluntary Response Action Program is to sever the exposure pathway through the use of physical contaminant removal, on-site remediation, or the use of engineering or institutional controls. Commonly, combinations of these are used. The cleanup goals are established based on the proposed land use and the Maine DEP's cleanup criteria for residential, industrial or other land uses. The end remedy will also ensure that down gradient and adjacent properties are protected from potential contaminant migration from the site. The Maine Department of Environmental Protection agency participates actively in the planning of investigations and cleanup plans as well as field activities. Any sites that pose immediate health and environmental concerns will be taken over by the Maine Department of Environmental Protection Agency to work with the community and/or owner for further resolve.

2. Work with Local, or State to Ensure Protection of Public Health and Environment

As previously mentioned the Maine Department of Environmental Protection is a partner with the Androscoggin Valley Council of Governments in this program and is involved with every aspect from site selection to cleanup planning. Cleanup plans included in Phase II Site Assessments will be developed in coordination with the Maine Department of Environmental Protection's Voluntary Response Action Program and will include both state and local health organizations. The cities of Lewiston and Auburn in western Maine have relatively larger populations and have their own departments of social services; however, many communities are much smaller. All communities, except the cities of Lewiston and Auburn, rely on the Maine Bureau of Health and healthy community organizations to monitor public health and provide public health information, respectively. These organizations are involved in our program, and we will work to ensure that their input is included in the development of cleanup plans.

The Voluntary Response Action Program requires that property owners apply to the program. We will work with owners or potential owners to assist them with the application process. Once accepted, the program will work with the owners to develop a sustainable cleanup and redevelopment plan. The program provides owners or prospective owners with a comfort letter when clean up is completed in accordance with an agreed upon plan for the type of redevelopment anticipated. Public health issues are always considered in developing the clean up plan; for example, higher levels of clean up are required for a proposed school, day care facility or housing project than for business uses. The Voluntary Response Action Program has worked successfully with hundreds of properties throughout Maine, substantially reducing the cost of clean up and the time required to complete the work.

I. Leveraging of Additional Resources

1. Identify Funds

Based on prior Brownfields grant experience, we anticipate that the cost of Phase I assessments will average approximately \$6,000 and Phase II assessments will average \$35,000 per site. The cost of staffing for facilitating the Brownfields Committee meetings, RFP writing and interviewing, GIS Geodatabase expansion, site inventory and selection, communication with the public, and serving in advisory capacities, as well as other miscellaneous Brownfields work, such as working with communities and businesses on pollution prevention strategies, combined will be approximately \$48,000. Travel, which includes attending the annual brownfields conference and various needed supplies will be approximately \$4,500. Since indirect and management costs, such as office space, computers and other technology, are not eligible for funding, AVCOG will be contributing an estimated cash match of \$28,483.

Additional funding includes in kind commitments from volunteer Brownfields Steering Committee members as well as involvement of the listed member organizations through direct contact, use of newsletters, and web sites. During each phase we will work with town officials to determine their level of interest, as well as seek involvement from the towns for Tax Increment Financing, Pine Tree Zones, Community Development Block Grants and other federal grant and loan programs. Thus town officials will be contributing time to the overall process.

Private property owners will also be involved in assisting staff to gather historical information, drawings, and environmental reports. Their most significant contribution to the program, however, will be during later phases: the cleanup and redevelopment.

AVCOG anticipates that the grant funds and in-kind contributions mentioned earlier will be adequate to carry out the objectives of the proposal and conduct Phase I and Phase II

assessments. Should additional funds be needed to complete the last Phase II assessment due to unforeseen circumstances, AVCOG membership funds would be utilized.

2. Demonstrate Ability to Leverage Funds

Androscoggin Valley Council of Governments believes the Assessment grant will be a catalyst to both public and private investment in the community. The Council has extensive experience working with the Maine state and federal agencies to secure funding for economic and community development projects. We will use this experience to pursue other grant funding for cleanup and development of Brownfields sites.

The costs of clean up and redevelopment are unknown at this time. These costs are dependent on the extent of contamination present and the anticipated reuse of the site. Clean up estimates for each site will be prepared during the assessment process. As mentioned earlier, we expect that property owners will be primarily responsible for clean up costs. Once clean up costs have been established, AVCOG and/or a municipality could apply for a Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund Grant or Cleanup Grant.

Androscoggin Valley Council of Governments has an existing commercial loan pool of \$7 million that has leveraged \$180 million additional private sector dollars over the past 25 years. Additionally, we have assisted more than fifteen municipalities to obtain Community Development Block Grant funds for infrastructure improvements and development. The Council has also been instrumental in helping four communities obtain Economic Development Administration Grants, in several cases more than one. We have also worked with municipalities and businesses to obtain various USDA Rural Development grants and loans, ranging from programs to assess business needs to financing capital improvements. Staff has worked with the Tax Increment Financing process and administers the Pine Tree Zone program for the region.

AVCOG is a membership organization; member communities and counties pay annual dues. Dues funds are used to match federal and state grants and to accomplish projects, which meet agency goals. Money from dues can be used to complete the program, if needed.

J. Programmatic Capability

1. Demonstrate Ability to Manage the Grant

The Androscoggin Valley Council of Governments regularly manages grants from the Federal Highway Administration, Economic Development Administration, and the United States Department of Agriculture Rural Development. Androscoggin Valley Council of Governments uses the nationally recognized Grant Management System for managing all grants. We archive our financial records for 8 years and have an annual audit. Finance Director Greg Whitney is familiar with federal grant requirements.

The technical aspects of the Assessment program will be overseen by our Community/Environmental Planner Janet Pelletier and professional engineer Fergus Lea; both which have been active in administering EPA funding through a prior Brownfields grant. Mr. Lea has more than 25 years of experience working with environmental programs in the region. He has extensive experience with solid waste, including landfill monitoring and design. He has also undertaken numerous programs in watershed management, groundwater/wellhead protection, and hazardous and universal waste management. Staff regularly works with municipal officials and involves the public in comprehensive and other planning programs including conducting charettes and visioning sessions. Staff has assisted many towns in preparing Request for Proposals for consultant services and has assisted towns and sub-regional groups manage large consultant and construction contracts.

2. History of Managing Federal Funds

During the past decade, Androscoggin Valley Council of Governments has received four grants from the EPA: one Brownfields Assessment Grant, two pollution prevention/environmental justice grants and a drinking water grant in conjunction with the town of Wilton. We have received solid waste technical assistance grants from the United States Department of Agriculture Rural Development each year for more than ten years. Androscoggin Valley Council of Governments has received four Rural Community Development Initiative grants to assist communities in establishing development strategies through Geographic Information Systems technology and strategic planning. The Androscoggin Valley Council of Governments is an Economic Development District and receives an annual grant from the Economic Development Administration, and also receives a number of state grants; including Community Development Block Grant technical assistance funds and pass through United States Department of Transportation funds from Maine Department of Transportation. Androscoggin Valley Council of Governments qualifies as a low-risk auditee.

3. EPA Reporting History

Androscoggin Valley Council of Government's Brownfields Assessment Grant FY2005, for \$200,000 was awarded to perform four (five accomplished) Phase I and three Phase II Assessments throughout Androscoggin, Oxford, and Franklin Counties. The Grant work is going according to the scheduled tasks and timeline that was proposed and is up-to-date with all required paperwork and reporting, including bills and quarterly reports. Androscoggin Valley Council of Governments qualified consultant is currently completing field work on Phase II Assessments.

4. Tracking/Measuring Progress

Androscoggin Valley Council of Governments will track progress and outputs by developing an excel spreadsheet which will include the schedule and reporting requirements including quarterly reporting and property profile forms. The schedule will include activity start and end dates for at least the following activities.

- Expand/update inventory and map sites
- Develop and issue Request for Proposal
- Interview and hire consultant
- Review, evaluate, and prioritize sites
- Secure owner approval
- Conduct Phase I Assessments
- Evaluate potential uses for each Phase I site and work with town officials
- Hold public meetings for each site
- Review Quality Assurance Project Proposal
- Select Phase II candidate sites
- Work with owners
- Conduct Phase II Assessments
- Further evaluate potential uses, commitment of owner and town
- Work with Maine Department of Environmental Protection on site findings/secure Voluntary Response Action Program clearance
- Develop cleanup plans
- Hold public hearings
- Discuss results with owner, officials, and Maine Department of Environmental Protection

All Steering Committee meetings will be documented with meeting minutes, Committee members will be updated by e-mail with any information and project progress. AVCOG will maintain frequent contact with the hired environmental consultant for project progress reporting.