

## 1. PROJECT AREA DESCRIPTION AND PLANS FOR REVITALIZATION

### a. Target Area and Brownfields

#### i. Background and Description of Target Area

The target area is the downtown portion of the City of Cambridge which is located within the Sustainable Communities boundary as designated by the state of Maryland. Included in the boundary of the target area are two historic districts, the Downtown Waterfront District, the Arts and Entertainment District, the Heritage Area Target Investment Zones and the Enterprise Zone. Also included within this district is a visitor center which is the home of the Dorchester County Office of Tourism.

The Choptank River, which runs through the downtown of Cambridge, is a significant tourism draw. There are a number of condominiums located on the waterfront which also serves as a center of boating and recreation in the area. This waterfront is mixed-use with new development opportunities, further providing for enhanced economic development.

Housing challenges include substandard housing in adjacent neighborhoods and a low proportion of owner-occupied housing units at 44%, compared to the national average of 65%. Other challenges include the need to renovate occupied commercial buildings in the downtown and underutilized historic and cultural buildings and places. A very important initiative for the city is the reuse and redevelopment of the Sailwinds port property on the waterfront.

It is also necessary for the state to retain Chesapeake College in the downtown as an economic development priority. Another opportunity would be the reuse of an abandoned railroad corridor for a recreational trail. The Dorchester Center for the Arts needs funding to expand its facilities in downtown Cambridge. Finally, the rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of the abandoned 1905 year old school building “Golden Shore Academy, designed by Benjamin Brown, a turn-of-the-century architect from Cambridge, would enhance the downtown’s appeal.

High Street, the city’s most historic street, is in need of major rehabilitation. Installation of a traffic circle at the intersection of Muse, Market, Academy, and the terminus of Maryland Avenue has been identified as a priority.

The city is a major tourism draw, being anchored by the waterfront parks, the nearby Harriet Tubman National Park, and the nearby Blackwater Wildlife Refuge.

#### ii. Description of the Brownfield Site(s)

The Brownfield site is the old City Hall Building at 307 Gay St. in downtown Cambridge. This building served as the site of city administrative operations until 2011, when offices were moved to 410 Academy St. which had been the previous Police Department. In 2010, the city built a new public safety complex at 10 Washington St. and

the police department moved into that building. The building came into use as the City Hall in 1934.

#### b. Revitalization of the Target Area

The City of Cambridge has seen a surge of new construction with the redevelopment of Cambridge Marketplace. Historic preservation efforts are taking place at the Hearne building on Race Street.

Environmental considerations are also important as the City is working on a \$1.8 million stream restoration effort at the headwaters of Cambridge Creek. The City also designed and installed its first Green Street, Maryland Avenue.

“Cambridge is ripe to be the next significant revitalization success story in the State of Maryland,” according to a newly released report that analyzes the potential for entrepreneurship development in downtown Cambridge. The nearly 100-page market and positioning study was funded by the Community Legacy program. Looking at the past, present, and potential future of Cambridge, the report includes recommendations that would strengthen downtown’s economic and retail environment.

Briefly, the report recommends improving the connection between downtown and the waterfront; bolstering downtown as a center for arts, creativity, and micro-enterprise development; and shaping the commercial district and waterfront as destinations for retail, entertainment, and cultural activities.

The study was conducted by Economic Development Visions, which specializes in economic development and downtown revitalization. The recommendation to do the study came out of the 2006 R/UDAT (Regional/Urban Design Assistance Team) report.

The city just completed a \$5 million wharf restoration for the deep water port on the Cambridge waterfront.

#### i. Reuse Strategy and Alignment with Revitalization

Potential new uses of the building include a community center, youth center, or a heritage museum detailing the rich history and culture of Dorchester County and the City of Cambridge. Discussions have centered on additional resources which will be needed to bring these various reuse options to fruition. One of the major planning instruments for the downtown is the Sustainable Communities Plan. Any of these uses would be consistent with that plan. The city is closely examining all of these options with an eye toward what resources would be available and what the need is in the community.

#### ii. Outcomes and Benefits of Reuse Strategy

Any of the reuse strategies discussed above would bring significant benefits to the City of Cambridge. All options would draw visitors to the city who would then patronize the

various shops, restaurants and hotels. This would increase the assessable base in the City of Cambridge, reduce the unemployment rate and raise the median household income.

The city lacks activities for youth. This encourages unlawful activity. Reuse of the building as a youth center would provide the opportunity for mentoring and healthy recreational opportunities as well as assistance with academics.

Likewise, the use of the building as a community center would fill a need which has been identified by community groups. There is a lack of meeting space in the downtown which is open to nonprofits and other community groups. Having meeting space would help these organizations to fulfill their mission without depleting their resources. Small community groups need meeting space and areas in which to organize and plan their strategies.

A heritage museum would also be a valuable addition to the city. There are a significant number of collections which have not been displayed in any other heritage sites in the city and surrounding area. Most of these other sites have displays specific to one particular aspect of history. Having a dedicated museum for the entirety of Dorchester and Cambridge history would be a draw for tourism. This would in turn bring in a significant number of visitors. In addition, having a new base of visitors will ensure that they would stay for longer given the number of other sites in the county. This would have a positive impact on hotels and restaurants in the area. The museum would convert those who would just ordinarily come on a day trip into overnight patrons.

### c. Strategy for Leveraging Resources

#### i. Resources Needed for Site Reuse

Funding will be needed for the rehabilitation of the building for its new use. The Brownfields grant will remove any contamination. The building is configured as an office building, as it was used as the old City Hall. There is an entry foyer, several conference rooms, and a number of individual offices.

The precise reuse will determine how the building will be rehabilitated. It is possible that some wall partitions will be knocked down to make one room out of two.

In any event, it is quite likely that the following systems will need overhaul or replacement: electrical, plumbing, and HVAC. Some of the flooring will need to be replaced and some areas of the building will need re-painting.

#### ii. Use of Existing Infrastructure

No additional new infrastructure will be needed in the course of site reuse. There is adequate street frontage and storm drainage. The existing street will handle any additional traffic.

## 2. COMMUNITY NEED AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

### a. Community Need

#### i. The Community's Need for Funding

Contributions from the public are limited due to the poor economic indicators in Cambridge and Dorchester County.

The following demographic information is taken from the 2017 American Community Survey developed by the US Census Bureau. The median household income in Cambridge is \$38,908, compared to \$78,916 for the state of Maryland.

Educational attainment is also low with only 84.0% of the adult population having completed high school or a higher level of education. In the state of Maryland, that figure is 89.9%.

The unemployment rate for September of 2019 for Dorchester County was 4.2%, while the rate for the state as a whole was 3.4%. Dorchester has the fourth highest unemployment rate in the state.

The median house value is \$153,900 compared to \$296,500 for the state of Maryland. These figures reflect serious economic challenges in the City of Cambridge and dictate that support from the public is not adequate to meet needs. Grant funding is necessary for this project.

#### ii. Threats to Sensitive Populations

##### (1) Health or Welfare of Sensitive Populations

Once this project is complete, the following benefits will occur:

- The public will not be exposed to hazardous materials
- The reuse of the building will allow the space to be available to the public again
- The appearance of the building itself, the downtown, and the City, will be significantly enhanced

##### (2) Greater Than Normal Incidence of Disease and Adverse Health Conditions

Since the building is vacant, there is no significant public health impact at the present time. However, this situation precludes any re-use of the building until the environmental problems are addressed.

##### (3) Disproportionately Impacted Populations

This building, in its present state, is hindering the city's re-development efforts. This has a negative impact on the economically impoverished in Cambridge. With the historically poor economy, services are not optimal. This affects those in poverty disproportionately.

Barriers to investment include challenges with the crime rate in certain parts of the city and the deteriorated appearance of housing in neighborhoods inhabited by persons of low-and-moderate income, high vacancy rates in the downtown, seasonal nature of employment, slow rate of private investment, and need for marketing funds to attract visitors.

The weaknesses in the local economy are as follows: relatively low educational attainment, lack of a skilled workforce, low economic indicators such as a low median income and a high poverty rate, lack of infrastructure, and lack of facilities for higher end businesses such as those dealing with information technology. Cambridge cannot provide significant incentives from its own budget.

Certain parts of the downtown present a blighted appearance, which the City is working to improve through the use of revitalization grants from the State of Maryland.

b. Community Engagement- Community Partners- The majority of this work will be done by the city as a function of its municipal duties. However, the project is supported by its non-profit partners in revitalization such as Habitat for Humanity. The Dorchester County government is also investing grant funds in the downtown.

### iii. Incorporating Community Input

A public hearing was held on 11/14, at 2:30m p.m. in Cambridge City Hall. The citizens are in support of cleaning up the contamination in the old City Hall and putting the building to a new use which will contribute to the revitalization of the downtown.

The City also has a Facebook page for communicating with the public. It will post information there on the progress of this project.

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

### a. Proposed Cleanup Plan

The plan that we have proposed would include six components that each contribute towards cleaning up the old Cambridge City Hall building. These components would include asbestos removal, PCB/MLV removal, lead based paint removal, removing old smoke detectors, eliminating mold growth, and removing unknown and potentially dangerous chemicals left in the building along with old mercury filled thermometers.

To determine the need for this cleanup project, an in depth study was performed by Aerosol Monitoring and Analysis, Inc., to look for hazardous substances and significant dangers to human health. The hazardous materials survey found numerous threats to

health within the building and in its building materials. Materials within the building were tested where appropriate with relevant chemical and physical tests to ascertain the existence and concentration of asbestos, mold, lead paint, polychlorinated biphenyls, and other substances. It was decided that a cleanup would need to occur on a significant level if the building was to be used again.

The City will put this project out to bid.

We would also be hiring a supervisor/inspector for this project for a period of six months to ensure that the removal is done in a professional manner and on schedule.

## b. Description of Tasks/Activities and Outputs

### i. Project Implementation •

The contractor will take action to remove asbestos, lead paint and lead containing materials, mold, PCBs, thermostats, and several miscellaneous potential threats to human health within the building.

The hazardous materials survey undertaken by Aerosol Monitoring & Analysis, Inc. documents the need. This survey was detailed in scope and serves as the guideline for this project with the City of Cambridge moving forward to undertake all recommendations in the survey to bring the building back to a safe state for the public. The project is expected to last six to 12 months once work begins. A supervisor hired by the city will oversee this work.

### ii. Anticipated Project Schedule

Once the grant is awarded, the city will go to work immediately in moving forward with the bid process. We would begin the hiring process for the supervisor position as soon as the grant award was announced, even before the money was received as it can take time to find a qualified candidate and conduct interviews and come to a final decision.

Once the contractor begins work, the exact order in which the hazardous materials would be removed would be up to their team at their discretion with the understanding of the twelve month dead line being a firm date. The supervisor would ensure that the job was coming along at the expected rate and take actions to correct this if the project was not proceeding at the speed expected.

### iii. Task/Activity Lead

While the work of removing the hazardous and contaminated material from the building will fall to Fisher's Environmental LLC, supervision will come from a hired expert. This individual's salary is considered a part of the overall project and they will be hired on for the duration of the cleanup process to ensure it takes place within the project time frame and to keep the city abreast of the progress being made. This person has not yet been

hired as funding for the project has not been confirmed at this time. Once funding is guaranteed, the hiring process will begin immediately.

#### iv. Outputs

The outputs for this project ultimately mean that the old city hall building will be safe to use by the Cambridge government as well as the public. This includes removal of all material showing concentrations of asbestos over 1%. These materials are already known to us due to the hazardous material survey. This will also include removal of mold and any spores resulting from the mold that could be hazardous to human health. The location of the mold is a known quantity thanks to the survey. 151 light ballasts noted in the survey believed to contain polychlorinated biphenyls (from before 1978) will be removed from the building.

Lead based paint and lead containing materials feature extensively throughout the property due to its common nature when the building was painted. As this paint flakes and breaks apart it can provide a hazard. The hazardous material survey noted numerous areas, walls, and objects contaminated with lead in one way or another. These will be removed and dealt with such that when the building is put to use the paint will not pose a threat. This is our most expensive cleanup goal, but we believe it is a critical one to the public safety.

Outputs will also include the removal of 43 old non-functional smoke detectors that contain hazardous substances, 5 mercury thermostats, 2 500 gallon fuel oil storage tanks, 9 unlabeled 55 gallon drums whose contents are unknown, and 33 paint and/or chemical containers whose contents are unknown.

#### c. Cost Estimates

The total price for this project is estimated to be approximately \$250,000.00 for both the cleanup costs (\$224,868.00) and hiring a qualified supervisor for the project for six months (~\$25,000.00). We plan to provide the 20% matching funds, in this case \$50,000.00, ourselves. The total grant we are requesting would thus be \$200,000.00.

The price estimates for the cleanup come from the organization performing the cleanup services, Fisher's Environmental, LLC and are as follows:

- Removal of asbestos: \$54,492.00
- Removal of PCB/MLV: \$2,799.00
- Removal of lead based paint: \$161,700.00
- Removal of smoke detectors: \$800.00
- Removal of mold: \$2,277.00
- Removal of unknown chemicals and thermostats: \$2,800.00

No other costs are associated with this project besides those listed for the cleanup services and the estimated \$25,000 to hire a temporary supervisor for the project.

#### d. Measuring Environmental Result

Measuring the levels of dangerous substances in the former city hall will be done by Fisher's Environmental, LLC as they work. The building will not see renovations or other upgrades until the cleanup is finished and the building declared safe for general use. Once the building is declared safe for use by organizations trained in such matters the city will transform this historic venue into one of several projects being considered at the property, each of which is designed to be useful to the public.

#### 4. PROGRAMMATIC CAPABILITY AND PAST PERFORMANCE

##### a. Programmatic Capability

##### i. Organizational Structure

##### ii. Description of Key Staff

The city government is headed by a Mayor and five Commissioners. Each of the Commissioners is elected in separate districts, or wards. City services include planning and zoning, fire protection, law enforcement, a citizens' police academy, water and sewer, trash pick-up, economic development, recreation and parks, street maintenance, neighborhood revitalization, and historic preservation. The city operates its own marina.

The City of Cambridge is one of the oldest towns in Maryland dating back to 1684. In 1986, a group of citizens organized an effort to recognize and preserve Cambridge's rich architectural heritage.

The City of Cambridge has one of the two Enterprise Zones located within Dorchester County. Businesses locating in a Maryland Enterprise Zone may be eligible for income tax credits in return for job creation; and real property tax credits for investing in capital enhancements made in the zone. Cambridge is also a HUB Zone. The Historically Underutilized Business Zone (HUB Zone) Empowerment Contracting Program is designed to stimulate economic development and create jobs in urban and rural communities by providing federal contracting preferences to small businesses. The city has used this tool to further economic development and neighborhood revitalization.

The mission of the Cambridge Neighborhood Revitalization Program is to improve neighborhoods, land use and quality of life through comprehensive strategies and partnerships; including engagement of residents and businesses around permanent and temporary repurposing of vacant land, beautification, blight mitigation, improvement and marketing of new & existing housing, social cohesion strategies, and enhanced human services.

The city's assets include: walkable residential neighborhoods and a downtown adjacent to the waterfront on the Choptank River; a mixed use waterfront with new development

opportunities; a new industrial park near the county airport; a growing tourism industry anchored by waterfront parks, a center dedicated to the history and legacy of Harriet Tubman, who was responsible for helping hundreds of slaves escape slavery; the nearby Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge; two recognized historic districts containing a total of 1500 properties; and a new vocational-technical school.

This project will be implemented and administered by the City Manager, Patrick Comiskey, who has 21 years of experience in municipal management. Mr. Comiskey has previously served as City Manager in Wellsburg, W.V. and Thomaston, GA. He holds a Master's Degree in Public Administration from West Virginia University. Other credentials include the designation of Certified Purchasing Manager, given by the Institute for Supply Management.

Mr. Comiskey will handle all grant reporting, bidding, and supervision of the individual who will be hired as Project Inspector.

### iii. Acquiring Additional Resources

The City will be fully capable of acquiring additional resources should that become necessary. Cambridge is a full-service municipality with contingencies built into its budget. The City also has the staff expertise to identify contractors, specialists and consultants to handle any additional work.

### b. Past Performance and Accomplishments

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

#### (1) Purpose and Accomplishments

The City was designated as a Sustainable Community in 2003 by the State of Maryland. Since that time, the city has received substantial funding for streetscape improvements and façade improvements. Major infrastructure work has been funded by the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE), Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR), State Highway Administration (SHA) and the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development.

The City has been very successful in implementing the approved projects from the Community Legacy Program administered by the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development. This is evident in the City's downtown core and the improvements to Race, Poplar, Muir, Gay and Academy Streets. Additionally, the improvements to Maces Lane now provides children with a much safer route to school with the inclusion of a sidewalk along one side of the street. City staff has managed numerous state grants for infrastructure improvements including streetscapes, park facilities, and waterfront improvements.

The City also requested housing assistance for the Pine Street neighborhood under the Community Legacy Program. This application requested funds to address 30 deteriorated properties either by rehabilitation, purchase, or demolition. The Maryland Historical Trust has approved the rehabilitation of 7 homeowner-occupied properties in the area (2 on Pine St., 1 on Hubbard, 1 on Fairmont, 1 on Robbins, and 1 on Dunn's Court.) The city has also received state approval of a modification to a grant for street improvement to Pine St. to include street lights, landscaping, and widening of the sidewalk to accommodate ADA requirements.

The total grant funding to the Pine Street project is now \$647,952.00 from the State. The City, by partnering with Habitat for Humanity - Choptank has levered those funds to now have a total of \$1,263,790.00.

#### (2) Compliance with Grant Requirements

The City has complied with all grant requirements. No issues or findings have been identified by the grantors.

#### IV.F. Leveraging

The City of Cambridge will provide a 20% match. No additional leveraging will be necessary. This will fill the need as expressed by the cleanup contractor. Once the project is finished at the price quoted, the contractor has guaranteed that all contaminated materials will be removed. The building will then be ready for reuse.