

135 N. Animas Street
P O Box 880
Trinidad, CO 81082



(719) 846-9843 ext.120
fax (719) 846-4140

RE: FY2026EPA Brownfields Community-Wide Assessment Grant Application

Applicant Information Sheet

The City of Trinidad is pleased to submit this proposal for FY2026 Brownfields Community-Wide Assessment Grant funding. Below we provide the information requested.

1. Applicant Identification:

City of Trinidad
135 N. Animas Street
Trinidad, Colorado 81082

2. Website URL : <https://www.trinidad.co.gov/>

3. Funding Requested:

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

4. Location:

- (a) City: Trinidad
(b) County: Las Animas
(c) State or Reservation: Colorado

5. Target Area and Priority Site Information:

- Target Areas:
 - El Corazon de Trinidad
 - Purgatoire River Walk
- Addresses of Priority Sites:
 - Schneider Brewery Complex – 236 North Convent Street, Trinidad, CO 81082
 - Former West Hotel – 267 North Commercial, Trinidad, CO 81082
 - 165 East 1st Street – 165 East 1st Street, Trinidad, CO 81082
 - Water Works Building – 223 East Cedar Street, Trinidad, CO 81082
 - 225 North Chestnut Street – 225 North Chestnut Street, Trinidad, CO 81082

6. Contacts:

- (a) Project Director:
Name: Nicholas Mason
Phone: (719) 846-9843 Ext. 120 | Email: nicholas.mason@trinidad.co.gov
Mailing Address: 135 N. Animas Street, Trinidad, Colorado 81082

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(b) Chief Executive/Highest Ranking Elected Official:
 Name: Cy Michaels, Mayor of the City of Trinidad

Phone: (719) 846-9843 | Email: cy.michaels@trinidad.co.gov
 Mailing Address: 135 N. Animas Street, Trinidad, Colorado 81082

7. Population:

- Population of the City of Trinidad: 8,309 (Source: US Census)

8. Other Factors:

Other Factors	Page #
Community population is 15,000 or less.	1, 5
The applicant is, or will assist, a federally recognized Indian Tribe or United States Territory.	
The priority site(s) is impacted by mine-scarred land.	
The priority site(s) is adjacent to a body of water (i.e., the border of the priority site(s) is contiguous or partially contiguous to the body of water, or would be contiguous or partially contiguous with a body of water but for a street, road, or other public thoroughfare separating them).	1, 2
The priority site(s) is in a federally designated flood plain.	2, 7
The reuse of the priority site(s) will facilitate renewable energy from wind, solar, or geothermal energy.	
The reuse of the priority site(s) will incorporate energy efficiency measures.	4
The proposed project will improve local resilience to the impacts of extreme weather events and natural disasters.	7
At least 30% of the overall project budget will be spent on eligible reuse/area-wide planning activities, as described in Section 3.A(2), for priority site(s) within the target area(s).	9
The target area(s) is impacted by a coal-fired power plant that has recently closed (2015 or later) or is closing.	

9. Letter from the State or Tribal Environmental Authority: A letter of acknowledgement from the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment is attached.

10. Releasing Copies of Applications: Not Applicable

January 26, 2026

Melisa Denvincenzi
Environmental Protection Agency
Region 8 Brownfields Program
1595 Wynkoop Street (EPR-B)
Denver, Colorado 80202-1129

RE: City of Trinidad - FY26 Community-Wide Assessment Grant Application

Dear Ms. Devincenzi:

I am writing to acknowledge and express our support of the Community-Wide Assessment Grant application for the City of Trinidad, Colorado. The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE), the state regulatory authority for hazardous and solid waste, has previously supported Trinidad in their efforts to address local contaminated sites and identify redevelopment opportunities within the City. We support this application as part of the City's efforts to revitalize blighted, vacant and underutilized properties with community-serving reuses. Funding provided by a successful application will allow Trinidad to continue to position properties for redevelopment and build upon their previous brownfields successes.

The City has a demonstrated history of successfully using brownfields funding, having received multiple US EPA Brownfields Coalition Assessment and Cleanup grants that leveraged \$50 million in additional cleanup and redevelopment funding. The activities outlined in this application will build upon the City's past success and return properties in the El Corazon de Trinidad and River Walk Target Areas to productive uses that support their community and the diversifying local economy. For these reasons, CDPHE enthusiastically supports Trinidad's proposal and is prepared to provide additional coordination and support pending a successful application.

If additional resources are necessary following completion of activities outlined in this application, CPDHE has the ability to provide funding for Brownfields cleanup through the Colorado Brownfield Revolving Loan Fund (CBRLF), state grants through our H.B. 1306 program, and the availability of a state income tax credit for remediation of contaminated land. CDPHE has informed Trinidad of their eligibility to apply to these funds for additional support.

In summary, we feel the proposed project is a vital component of the City's efforts to revitalize blighted and underutilized properties as community assets that stimulate economic development. As such, and due to our past collaboration with the City, we

fully support their continuing efforts to identify and address potential environmental hazards that currently impede redevelopment of properties within the City.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kathleen Knox". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "K" and a long, sweeping underline.

Kathleen Knox
Brownfields Coordinator
Hazardous Materials and Waste Management Division

cc: Nicholas Mason, City of Trinidad
Carrie Rackey, Stantec
Annie Eiseman, Stantec



1. PROJECT AREA DESCRIPTION & PLANS FOR REVITALIZATION: Target Area & Brownfields: 1.a. Overview of Brownfield Challenges and Description of Target Area:

The geographic boundary for this Brownfield Community-Wide Assessment Grant is the rural **City of Trinidad**, the largest city in Las Animas County located in southern Colorado's Purgatoire River valley. Established in 1862, Trinidad experienced rapid growth with the local discovery of coal. The City's population expanded from 1,200 in 1870 to 7,500 by 1900, driven by mining and the presence of the historic Santa Fe Trail (now Main Street), through the heart of Trinidad. Trinidad's prosperity was reflected in its downtown, where brick-paved streets and ornate buildings were constructed. Trinidad still boasts some of the best examples of Western Victorian architecture in the United States, giving the City a distinctly European aesthetic set within a Western landscape.

Despite this rich history and cultural heritage, Trinidad has had decades of economic decline due to its reliance on volatile coal, oil, and gas industry cycles. The closure of most Colorado coal mines by the 1960s marked the beginning of prolonged population loss and disinvestment, leaving behind numerous brownfields. Since 1950, Trinidad's population has declined from nearly 14,000 in the 1940s to just 8,309 today. Eroding mining and energy sectors continue to impact the City, where the poverty rate (18.5%) still far exceeds the nation (12.4%).¹ Decades of decline have deterred investment and left brownfields clustered downtown and along the formerly industrialized Purgatoire River. These sites negatively impact Trinidad by occupying centrally located spaces, impeding the creation of affordable housing, new businesses and jobs, and community services and gathering spaces. Brownfields are also constraining opportunities to build on the City's promising economic potential in the arts, tourism, and historic preservation sectors. These sites pose health and safety risks to the low-income population who live in close proximity to brownfields.

Trinidad made great strides in addressing brownfields with previous Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Brownfield Coalition Assessment Grants awarded in FY15 and FY21. The FY26 grant will support continuation of this momentum. The Target Areas for this grant are Trinidad's downtown **El Corazon de Trinidad** and the **Purgatoire River Walk**. El Corazon de Trinidad ("the Heart of Trinidad") is the City's Historic District listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and a certified Colorado Creative District. Encompassing approximately 0.25 square miles in southern and central downtown, the District contains many historic commercial, industrial, and mixed-use properties, many of which are underutilized or vacant and impacted by real or perceived environmental contamination. The River Walk follows the Purgatoire River for approximately three and a half miles through the City along the northwestern edge of downtown, and represents a key recreational, environmental, and economic asset. But brownfields along the formerly industrialized river are creating obstacles to this revitalization plan.

1.b. Description of the Priority Brownfield Site(s): A brownfield inventory completed under the previous EPA Brownfield Grant identified dozens of sites throughout the Target Areas, from prominent vacant historic buildings and storefronts with asbestos and lead paint to numerous smaller blighted sites including former auto repair and fueling stations where petroleum underground tanks have not been removed or investigated, dry cleaners with potential solvent contamination and small manufacturing with potential fuels, oils, solvents, and heavy metals impacts. The River Walk passes through an historically industrial area where the full scope of past uses needs to be assessed, but it is known that a manufactured gas plant operated along the river and associated polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbon concentrations have been investigated. Trinidad has inventoried high-priority brownfield sites that are ready for assessment and cleanup/reuse planning within both Target Areas. In the **El Corazon de Trinidad Target Area**, priority sites include:

- The 38,000-square-foot (SF) **Schneider Brewery Complex** on Convent Street, a former brewery vacant since the 1950s, and one of the largest historic buildings in downtown Trinidad. It is prioritized because redevelopment of a building of this size would have major catalytic revitalization effects and because its owner is interested in mixed reuse with housing and commercial spaces if environmental concerns like asbestos, lead paint, fuels, and oils are evaluated.
- **The former West Hotel** is a historic 3-story 7,956-SF commercial building at the corner of North Commercial and Plumb Streets, two blocks north of Main Street. Built around 1900, it reflects early 20th-century downtown growth. Centrally located on a main commercial corridor, the building is ideally suited for ground-floor commercial space, and residential or hotel uses on the upper floors once concerns about asbestos and lead paint are addressed.

¹ US Census 2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

- **165 East 1st Street** is a vacant 2,840-SF historic building most recently used as offices, prioritized because it is an attractive nuisance for crime and trespassing, putting the community and homeless people at risk of exposure to asbestos and lead paint. In 2023, a fire likely started by trespassers seeking shelter damaged the building. The adjacent A.R. Mitchell Museum of Western Art seeks to expand into this space to support cultural and economic activity downtown, but environmental concerns about asbestos, lead paint, and potential additional contaminants from unknown past uses must first be evaluated and addressed.

In the **River Walk Target Area**, Trinidad has identified the **Water Works Building** and **225 North Chestnut Street** (both located in a Federal Emergency Management Agency [FEMA] designated floodplain) as key priorities in the River Walk and Park Improvement Project.

- The city-owned historic Water Works building is Trinidad's 2nd-oldest surviving structure, built in 1879, and one of the West's best-preserved 19th-century waterworks. Representing Trinidad's transition from a frontier settlement dependent on collecting river water to a community with a modern piped system, this site is prioritized for its interpretive value and its ability to enrich the River Walk experience, offering a place-based connection to Trinidad's past and to the Purgatoire River. Contaminants may include fuels, oils, and metals from deteriorating components.
- 225 N. Chestnut Street is a 2-acre vacant lot within 500 feet of the River Walk and across the street from a park. Given this area's industrial history, past use likely included manufacturing/industrial, with potential contaminants including petroleum fuels and oils, metals, solvents, and asbestos and lead paint from improperly demolished buildings. This site is around the corner from two lots with historic vacant buildings. Together, this cluster represents an opportunity for mixed commercial and housing serving residents and visitors to the River Walk in a green, walkable section of the Target Areas.

In addition to contaminants from past onsite uses, each of these brownfields also faces potential for contamination to have migrated from nearby sources like gas stations, dry cleaners, and small manufacturing due to the city's history of dense downtown mixed-use development.

1.c. Identifying Additional Sites: During the first year of the project period, the City will focus assessment activities within the Target Areas to ensure early progress and measurable outcomes. The City will update its existing inventory of brownfield sites in the Target Areas to help prioritize sites for assistance. If sufficient grant funds remain after the first year, the City will expand assessment efforts to additional eligible sites throughout the City.

To guide the identification and selection of brownfield sites, the City has established prioritization criteria aligned with project objectives and EPA Brownfield Program goals. These criteria include sites with redevelopment potential based on:

- Creation of living-wage jobs
- Leveraging arts, historic preservation, and/or recreation
- Development of housing options
- Catalytic potential
- Access to basic services (e.g., grocery stores, healthcare, pharmacies)
- Potential to enhance River Walk visitor experience
- Community-expressed priorities
- Property owner willingness to participate

Revitalization of the Target Area: 1.d. Reuse Strategy and Alignment with Revitalization Plans: Trinidad is emerging as a regional destination for arts, culture, and outdoor recreation, supported by attractions like Fisher's Peak State Park, the A.R. Mitchell Museum of Western Art, and the Santa Fe Trail Days Festival. These tourism assets are strengthening and diversifying the local economy by drawing visitors from across Colorado and neighboring states. Brownfield reuse plans build on this momentum by aligning brownfield reuse strategies to enhance livability and leverage the power of the heritage, arts, and recreation tourism sectors for community-wide economic development.

The vision for the historic **Schneider Brewery** and **West Hotel** ground floor storefronts is for reuse as galleries, shops, and restaurants. The upper floors will be converted to multi-family housing, increasing residential opportunities in the City's core, reducing development pressure on outlying areas, and maximizing use of existing infrastructure. Redevelopment plans for the property at **165 East 1st Street** will support desired expansion of the A.R. Mitchell Museum of Western Art (located in the adjacent revitalized historic Jamieson Dry Goods building), further strengthening Trinidad's growing arts economy and celebrating local heritage.

The **Water Works** property and **225 North Chestnut Street** are key components of the broader River Walk and Park Improvement Project. Assessment and restoration planning for the Water Works building will showcase Trinidad's history as part of a trail of interpretive signage for the River Walk. 225 Chestnut is

envisioned for mixed residential and commercial use complementing the River Walk, nearby park, and with walkable access to downtown jobs, services, and amenities.

These reuse plans align with City and regional land use and revitalization priorities of historic preservation, the arts, and recreation tourism documented in multiple plans, actions, and investments. Each plan was developed with community engagement to ensure outcomes align with local priorities and needs.

- Trinidad is working to transform the Purgatoire River corridor guided by the **Purgatoire River Vision Plan** and the **Trails Master Plan** which were shaped through extensive public engagement. Current phases focus on restoring riverbanks and habitat and improving trails and access along the River Walk. Goals are to strengthen downtown connectivity with the River and position the riverfront as a key driver of economic development, tourism, and livability.
- Trinidad's **2024 Strategic Plan** prioritizes developing the tourism economy, expanding housing opportunities, and enhancing parks and recreation planning.
- The **2021-2026 Regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy** prioritizes historic preservation and recreation opportunities as vital to the City's economic future.
- Trinidad's **2017 Comprehensive Plan** goals include: 1) reuse of downtown buildings, 2) diversifying the economy with a focus on the arts and historic/natural resource preservation; and 3) higher-density housing and multi-use buildings in areas served by local infrastructure, like El Corazon de Trinidad.
- Trinidad has established **Planning & Zoning** policies to remove barriers to housing development, including affordability bonuses (which offset the lower revenue from affordable housing projects to make them financially feasible), allowing accessory dwelling units, and promoting density and infill development.
- Trinidad is reactivating downtown brownfields to strengthen its arts-based economy, demonstrated by its designation as the El Corazon de Trinidad **Certified Creative District**, a state program that supports attracting and retaining creative entrepreneurs. The City also became Colorado's first **Space to Create** community, resulting in the development of 40+ affordable artist live/work units on a former brownfield within the district—advancing both creative-sector growth and workforce housing.
- Trinidad's planning and investment to promote the region's recreation tourism industry includes the 2019 purchase of a 30 square mile former ranch atop 9,633-foot **Fisher's Peak** overlooking the City. The land is now Fisher's Peak State Park, Colorado's 42nd (and 2nd largest) state park. Brownfield assessment and reuse will play a critical role in providing hotels, restaurants, services, and amenities to park visitors.

1.e. Outcomes and Benefits of Reuse Strategy: Trinidad has a proven record of economic development through supporting brownfield reuse. Funded by the two previous EPA Brownfield grants, the City's Brownfields Program has leveraged >\$50 million in cleanup and redevelopment investment in housing, spaces for new business, and historic preservation, primarily downtown. For example, the City helped prepare the 3-story, 35,574-SF historic Columbian Hotel building for mixed residential and commercial reuse (\$8.5M leveraged) and the 23,000-SF national historic registry-listed East Street School for redevelopment with 13 affordable live-work spaces for artists, studios, and community/culinary spaces (\$9.3M leveraged). Most recently, the City conducted assessment and cleanup planning at the long-vacant, historic Holy Trinity Convent and School, currently in development with apartments, a hostel, and a bar/restaurant in downtown Trinidad and two blocks from the River Walk (>\$10M leveraged).

Adaptive reuse of the three Downtown Target Area priority buildings, which total 48,796 SF (approx. 25% ground floor for commercial use and 75% upper floors for residential use), could create over 100 new permanent jobs and over 40 new downtown housing units.² By supporting brownfield redevelopment for multi-family residential use, the grant will increase the local housing stock, alleviating the housing shortage caused in part by the unusable condition of many of the area's aging buildings. Additional housing will ease the cost burden for Target Area residents, 53% of whom >30% of household income on housing.³

Historic preservation investments like those planned for the priority brownfields are a proven economic catalyst in Colorado. A 2011 study found that in Colorado ~32 new jobs are created for every \$1M spent on preservation of historic buildings and \$4M in investment is leveraged by every \$1M in State Historic Fund grants for redevelopment projects.⁴ Reuse of historic priority brownfields including the Schneider Brewery, West Hotel, Water Works, and others will improve property values, generate jobs, expand housing options, and attract millions of dollars in investment.

² Assuming 100-150 square feet/employee and 800-square-foot residential units

³ US Census American Community Survey 2023 5-Year Estimates

⁴ <http://hermes.cde.state.co.us/drupal/islandora/object/co:11041/datastream/OBJ/view>

Advancing Trinidad’s planned River Walk through brownfield revitalization will stimulate economic development in the Target Areas. Studies show that riverfront revitalization can increase adjacent property values by 10–20% and boost local visitation and spending.⁵ The City of Pueblo, CO demonstrates the economic potential of riverfront development. Pueblo’s River Walk, developed in the 1990s, has become a major economic hub attracting businesses and investment in nearby housing, increasing walkability, and helping to retain residents in a city recovering from an industrial past. With amenities on redeveloped brownfields, Trinidad’s River Walk will generate similar benefits for the local community and visitors.

Revitalization of the priority sites will leverage the economic development power of the arts, heritage, and outdoor recreation sectors which are proven economic drivers in Colorado. In 2019, Colorado tourism generated \$1.5B in state/local taxes and created 180,000 jobs statewide.⁶ Since 2005, Las Animas County tourism has created 200+ new local jobs, generated \$10M in earnings for tourism-related business, and seen tourism spending double.⁷ Since El Corazon de Trinidad’s Creative District designation, income from Trinidad’s lodging tax has nearly doubled. Redeveloping the priority site at 165 East 1st Street to support expansion of the beloved A.R. Mitchell Museum of western art, a major cultural landmark in downtown Trinidad, will increase attraction of tourism and associated economic activity.

Strategy for Leveraging Resources: 1.f Resources Needed for Site Reuse: The City’s Brownfield Program has a strong leveraging track record, bringing in over \$50M in redevelopment investment following assessments and cleanup planning. The City will use this experience and leveraging power for the high priority sites identified in this application. The table below summarizes leveraging opportunities for the city and brownfield redevelopers.

EPA Technical Assistance for Brownfields – Unsecured, eligible	
Purpose: Assessment	EPA contractors can conduct EPA-funded assessment work in the unlikely event that additional characterization is needed.
Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) Brownfield Cleanup Grant and Revolving Loan Fund – Unsecured, eligible	
Purpose: Remediation	CDPHE has cleanup funding available through its Cleanup Grant and RLF programs. Trinidad has previously leveraged \$309K of cleanup funding for brownfield projects.
Colorado Dept. of Oil and Public Safety – Unsecured, eligible	
Purpose: Assessment & Remediation	Provides funding for underground storage tank assessment and removal.
City of Trinidad Housing Now Fund – Developer incentive	
Purpose: Reuse	\$1.5M fund for workforce housing development, \$25K/unit up to \$200K/project; Resulting rents are capped at 100% of the area median income for two years.
Colorado Dept. of Local Affairs (DOLA) – Unsecured, eligible	
Purpose: Reuse	DOLA offers grants municipalities several grants to support affordable housing acquisition, rehabilitation, and construction for residential development.
History Colorado (state historic preservation agency) – Unsecured, eligible	
Purpose: Reuse	Offers grants for planning, rehab, and restoration of historic structures.
US Economic Development Agency (EDA) – Unsecured, eligible	
Purpose: Reuse	Funds infrastructure, site readiness, planning, and redevelopment projects that help distressed communities attract investment, create jobs, and support revitalization.
Trinidad Community Foundation – Unsecured, eligible	
Purpose: Reuse	Funds grants to local organizations, supporting health, wellness, education, recreation, and historic preservation.
Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) – Unsecured, eligible	
Purpose: Reuse	GOCO grants fund outdoor recreation, parks, trails, open space, planning, and stewardship which the city can leverage for River Walk development. The City has previously received GOCO grants for park projects.

⁵https://www.rva.gov/sites/default/files/Planning/PDFDocuments/MasterPlan/RiverfrontPlan/Plan/14_Funding_Maintenance_Conclusions.pdf

⁶ <https://www.denver.org/tourism-pays/tourism-pays-for-colorado/>

⁷ <https://www.travelstats.com/dashboard?ucode=800>

Developers can build a capital stack of the funds above for each of the high priority sites. In addition to the funds listed above, the City and developers can access **brownfield remediation and historic preservation tax credits** for cleanup and reuse of the priority site historic buildings. The City has further incentivized investment with **affordability bonuses** that provide a developer permission to build more units/extra height if affordable housing is included, making projects financially feasible for developers who might not otherwise build in Trinidad. Both Target Areas are also located in **Opportunity Zones** where investors can leverage capital gains tax incentives that also help make redeveloping brownfields like the priority sites pencil.

1.g. Use of Existing Infrastructure: The City’s goal of revitalizing existing downtown areas and sustainably reusing existing buildings means grant funds will be focused in developed areas served by existing road, water, sewer, natural gas, and electrical infrastructure. The Target Areas and priority brownfield sites have been prioritized because their reuse will promote dense, centralized, infill development and adaptive building reuse. No infrastructure expansion is anticipated to be required to redevelop the priority brownfields.

2. COMMUNITY NEED & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: Community Need: 2.a. The Community’s Need for Funding: Trinidad is a **small rural city** with a population of 8,309. The County’s population density is just 3.1 people/square mile, ranking it 50th out of Colorado’s 64 counties. Since 2010, Trinidad’s population has declined by more than 10%, reflecting prolonged economic distress and outmigration. In March 2020, a major local oil and gas employer reduced its Trinidad-based workforce by 10%, compounding longstanding economic challenges. As the City transitions from its history tied to the volatile coal, rail, and oil and gas sectors, economic vitality is low.

Low incomes and property values severely limit both tax revenues and residents’ disposable income that could otherwise support brownfield redevelopment. Trinidad’s median household income is 55% of the state median, and 18.5% of city residents live below the poverty line. Property values are low with median home values less than 50% of the state median.

Table 1	Trinidad	Colorado	US
Population	8,309	5,810,774	332M
Poverty Rate	18.5%	9.4%	12.4%
Median Household Income	\$50,792	\$92,470	\$78,538
Median Home Value	\$196,900	\$502,000	\$303,400

Source: Census 2023 American Community Survey 5-yr data

The City is trying to recover from a 2025 budget shortfall of \$580,000⁸, requiring dedication of all resources to core city services. Without EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant funding, the City lacks the financial capacity to identify contamination, reduce redevelopment risk, and plan for productive reuse of brownfield properties essential to economic recovery and revitalization.

2.b. Health or Welfare of Sensitive Populations: Trinidad residents are experiencing significant economic challenges that affect the welfare of residents, particularly acute for older adults, children, people with disabilities, and low-income households which are disproportionately represented in Trinidad (Table 2). The City’s senior population rate is higher than state and national levels and studies have found that elderly residents of rural southeastern Colorado experience higher rates of economic and health vulnerability than urban areas.⁹ Trinidad’s senior, youth, and low income populations live amid dozens of brownfield sites that pose health risks to older residents, many of whom have increased sensitivity to environmental contaminants. High poverty rates make it impossible for Trinidad’s seniors and families with children to avoid exposure, whether by relocating or by making costly home modifications like HVAC upgrades to avoid or filter pollution.

Table 2	Trinidad	Colorado	US
Senior Population %	21.1%	15.2%	16.8%
Senior Poverty Rate	14.7%	8.0%	10.4%
Children/Youth Poverty Rate	20.0%	10.6%	16.0%
Households receiving Food Stamp/SNAP Benefits	24.7%	8.0%	11.8%
People with disabilities	19.9%	11.2%	13.0%
Homes built before 1980	73.5%	40.6%	50.5%

Source: Census 2023 American Community Survey 5-yr data

Economic hardship in Trinidad directly limits access to healthcare, food, and essential services. 10.9% of Las Animas County residents under age 65 are uninsured¹⁰, and the County is designated a Health Professional Shortage Area¹¹, reflecting limited access to primary and specialty care. Portions of Trinidad and

⁸ Huerfano-Las Animas World Journal, Trinidad confronts \$580k budget shortfall, November 7, 2024

⁹ <https://www.coloradohealthinstitute.org/research/colorado-seniors-and-their-health-where-are-older-adults-most-vulnerable>

¹⁰ US Census Quick Facts accessed January 2026

¹¹ US Health Resources and Services Administration Data Warehouse accessed January 2026

surrounding rural areas face reduced access to affordable, healthy food options, increasing reliance on convenience stores and fast-food outlets. Nearly 25% of households receive food stamps/SNAP benefits, triple Colorado’s average, indicating food insecurity. Many households must choose between basic household needs, healthcare, and groceries, leading to poor health outcomes.

An EPA Brownfield Grant will help Trinidad reduce health risks for seniors, children, and low-income residents who live near numerous contaminated sites and deteriorating aging buildings. By assessing and cleaning up hazardous materials, the grant will lessen exposure to lead, asbestos, and soil contaminants and strengthen wellbeing in this economically strained community.

2.c. Greater Than Normal Incidence of Disease and Adverse Health Conditions: Las Animas County (where 60% of the population is in the City of Trinidad), ranks below the state and nation for many health outcomes, including premature death, poor mental health, and adverse birth outcomes.¹² 12% of births in the County are classified as low birthweight, compared to 9% statewide¹², a disparity that may be linked to environmental contamination along with poverty, and limited prenatal care.

County residents experience higher-than-average rates of heart disease, cancer, asthma, and poor mental health (Table 3). Lung disease is of particular concern; a study found that men in Las Animas County experienced lung cancer at a rate of 48 per 1,000, compared to 44.8 per 1,000 statewide. Exposure to asbestos and other contaminants commonly found in older, vacant, and deteriorated buildings can exacerbate respiratory disease and increase cancer risk.

TABLE 3	Las Animas County	Colorado
Heart Disease	5%	3%
Cancer	7%	6%
Diabetes	16%	7%
Adult asthma	16%	14%
Poor mental health	17%	11%
Source: 2018 Community Health Assessment Las Animas County		

Blight and underutilized properties also contribute to adverse mental health outcomes. Las Animas County experiences rates of diseases of despair, including drug overdoses, suicide, and alcoholic liver disease, twice state and national averages. Medical conditions can be worsened by mental depression and poor mental health, which is prevalent in the project area. Depression is linked to a higher likelihood of developing a range of physical illnesses such as endocrine, musculoskeletal, and heart conditions, and can intensify the overall burden of disease.¹³

Addressing brownfield contamination and blight will reduce exposure pathways while supporting redevelopment patterns that improve walkability, reduce vehicle emissions, and strengthen neighborhood cohesion—factors directly linked to improved physical and mental health.

2.d. Economically Impoverished/Disproportionately Impacted Populations: The grant will stimulate economic development and ease cost burdens for the Target Area communities who are severely impoverished and bear disproportionate environmental burdens. Poverty rates in Trinidad are far higher than state and national rates, and incomes are a fraction of the living wage. The living wage in Las Animas County for a working adult to support a spouse and two children is \$80,912 (\$38.90/hour × 2,080 hours)¹⁴ whereas Trinidad’s median household income is just \$50,792.

These low-income communities also bear a heavy environmental burden. Trinidad’s aging housing stock, most of it built pre-1980 with a median construction year of 1952, poses health risks to residents, as they likely contain lead-based paint, asbestos, and other hazardous materials. City residents face a greater risk of lead paint exposure than 93% of US census tracts.¹⁵ Many of Trinidad’s aging buildings are vacant or poorly maintained, with a high potential for deteriorating materials to release contaminants into dust and soil, continuing to expose nearby residents, especially children, seniors, and low-income households, without proper assessment and remediation. There are also a large number of underground storage tanks (USTs) in Trinidad, associated with old gas stations and light and heavy industrial facilities. Trinidad residents are more likely to live near USTs storing petroleum, solvents, and other hazardous materials than 91% of US census tracts.¹⁶

Trinidad and Las Animas County disproportionately experience extreme weather events including flooding and heat as well as wildfire. Areas along the Purgatoire River in Trinidad are in a **federally designated**

¹² County Health Rankings and Roadmaps (www.countyhealthrankings.org) accessed January 2026

¹³ Association Between Depression and Physical Conditions Requiring Hospitalization, [Journal of the American Medical Association](#), May 3, 2023

¹⁴ Massachusetts Institute of Technology Living Wage Calculation (accessed January 2026)

¹⁵ PolicyMap accessed January 2026

floodplain.¹⁶ Trinidad is in the 90th US percentile of risk to homes from wildfire¹⁷. The City is more likely to experience harmful effects of extreme heat events than 75% of the US.¹⁸ Many of the City’s brownfields are in or near these hazard-prone areas, where vacant or deteriorating structures can worsen environmental risks by trapping heat, accumulating debris, or releasing contaminants during floods or fires. For Trinidad’s low-income, elderly, and otherwise sensitive residents, this compounds existing vulnerabilities. Cleaning up these brownfields and returning them to productive use will reduce environmental hazards, create safer and more resilient neighborhoods, and provide much-needed community assets that strengthen residents’ ability to withstand and recover from extreme weather events. Because Trinidad is a small, tightly knit City with residential neighborhoods woven directly into the Downtown core, homes sit in close proximity to the many brownfield sites scattered throughout the City. With its dense concentration of underused or deteriorating properties, it is nearly impossible for residents, especially in older central neighborhoods, to avoid living near a brownfield. In a community of this size and layout, environmental exposure is not confined to isolated industrial zones but is embedded in the everyday places where people live, work, and gather.

Community Engagement: 2.e. Project Involvement: 2.f. Project Roles: In addition to the partners listed below, the City will continue successful relationships with state agencies including CDPHE, DOLA, and History Colorado who will assist with redevelopment planning and funding. Project partners who will assist with the project are listed in the table below.

Trinidad Historic Main Street Program	Contact: Veronica Maes, Main Street Program Coordinator, veronica.maes@trinidad.co.gov
Mission: Preserve and revitalize Trinidad’s historic downtown.	Project Role: Coordinate community engagement, align reuse plans with historic preservation priorities, and guide strategic reuse planning.
Trinidad Housing Authority	Contact: Kathee Adams kadams@trinidadhousing.gov
Mission: Provide quality, affordable, safe housing to eligible families.	Project Role: Identify brownfields suitable for affordable housing, coordinate community needs and priorities, and manage due diligence for housing projects.
Huerfano-Las Animas County Health Department	Contact: Kim Gonzalez kgonzales@la-h-health.org
Mission: Preventative health, education, and healthcare services to enhance quality of life.	Project Role: Assist with outreach to sensitive populations and establishing health-related metrics to track project outcomes
Colexico Alliance	Contact: Pat Howlett, director@colexicoalliance.org
Mission: Nonprofit fostering regional collaboration and sustainable economic	Project Role: Publicize availability of grant funds at regular meetings and invite the City to speak about brownfield redevelopment at its events.
Downtown Trinidad Development Group	Contact: Karl Gabrielson, karl@tdadconstruction.com
Mission: Development that stimulates economic growth, attracts investment, and transforms Trinidad into a vibrant tourist and residential community.	Role: Experienced brownfield redeveloper will work with project partners to share experience with successful historic preservation and fundraising approaches.
CDPHE Brownfield Program	Contact: Mark Rudolph mark.rudolph@state.co.us
Mission: Advancing Colorado’s health and protecting the places where we live, learn, work, and play.	Project Role: Technical guidance, regulatory expertise, and funding coordination

2.g. Incorporating Community Input: The City of Trinidad is committed to transparent and meaningful community engagement throughout the Brownfields Assessment Grant period. Community engagement has already begun, as this EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant application was introduced and discussed at a City of Trinidad Planning Commission meeting in January 2026, providing early public awareness and feedback. Project progress will be communicated and community input solicited using the following means:

- Create a webpage on the City’s website within 3 months of project initiation. Information posted on the website will include the following: 1) project-specific informational fact sheets; 2) a project schedule; 3)

¹⁶ Federal Emergency Management Agency accessed via PolicyMap January 2026

¹⁷ USDA and US Forest Service Wildfire Risks to Community website, accessed January 2026

¹⁸ US Centers for Disease Control accessed via PolicyMap January 2026

links to other websites such as the EPA website; and 4) setting up cross-referencing website links with non-lead member websites.

- Hold a minimum of four public meetings (see Section 3.a for schedule). These meetings will include a presentation regarding project information and progress, and interactive exercises intended to encourage sharing of attendee ideas regarding the brownfield program.
- Use of local print/online/social media to report project progress and announce public meetings

To ensure that community input is considered, responded to, and in many cases adopted, the following actions will be taken: 1) the results of meeting data gathering efforts and other input received will be published online to ensure transparency amongst stakeholders; 2) enhancement of the leadership capacity of community members and groups will be encouraged to better empower them to meaningfully participate in brownfield revitalization; and 3) how project decisions were affected by community input will be described, and how this input positively influenced the economic, social, and environmental successes of the project explained. At all meetings, special accommodations will be made available to ensure the participation of people with disabilities and non-English speakers, as needed.

3. TASK DESCRIPTIONS, COST ESTIMATES & MEASURING PROGRESS: Description of Tasks/Activities & Outputs: 3.a. Project Implementation: 3.b. Anticipated Project Schedule: 3.c. Task/Activity Lead: 3.d. **Outputs:** The City will procure a Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP) immediately following receipt of an EPA Cooperative Agreement (CA). Tasks/activities proposed to be funded under this grant are described below.

Task 1: CA Oversight and Reporting:	Lead: Trinidad with QEP Support
Implementation: Trinidad will monitor project scope, schedule, and budget and provide status updates to the Coalition. Trinidad will be responsible for compliance with grant terms and conditions including reporting and drawdowns.	
Schedule: Trinidad will lead this task including monthly drawdowns, quarterly reporting, annual Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) and financial reports, final reporting, and all other reporting required by the Cooperative Agreement with EPA.	
Outputs: Quarterly reports; EPA Assessment, Cleanup, & Redevelopment Exchange System (ACRES) database updates; DBE reports; Federal Financial Reports; Final Project Closeout Report.	
Task 2: Community Engagement	Lead: Trinidad with support QEP
Implementation: The community engagement task will include the following: 1) preparation of a public involvement plan; 2) outreach material development; 3) solicit, consider, and respond to community input, including a minimum of 4 public/stakeholder meetings; and 4) coordinate meetings with property owners to encourage brownfield reuse and project participation.	
Schedule: Community Engagement milestones from project start: 1)community involvement plan and hold public kickoff meeting in first 3 months; 2) hold at least three additional grant-related community events, one per grant project year; 3) meet with stakeholders from funding agencies, developers, and neighborhood representatives for input on grant activities; and 4) update City’s website at least twice/year.	
Outputs: Community involvement plan; Public and property owner meetings, presentations, handouts, and notes; City website updates; Press releases, fact sheets and other educational materials.	
Task 3: Phase I and II ESAs	Lead: Trinidad will direct the QEP
Implementation: The City will complete 15 Phase I environmental site assessments (ESAs), 5 Phase II ESAs, and 5 regulated building material (RBM) surveys. Eligibility forms have been prepared for submittal to the EPA for the priority brownfields listed in Section 1.a.ii which include sites from both Target Areas. Phase I ESAs will be performed in accordance with the All Appropriate Inquiries (AAI) Final Rule and the ASTM International (ASTM) E1527-21 Phase I ESA standard. A completed AAI checklist will be completed for each Phase I ESA report. A project quality assurance project plan (QAPP) will be prepared to govern Phase II ESA/Regulated Building Material (RBM) Survey quality control. It will conform to EPA and CDPHE requirements. Phase II ESAs will be completed in accordance with the ASTM 1903-11 Phase II ESA standard. Each Phase II ESA/RBM survey will include the following: 1) a Sampling and Analysis Plan (SAP), 2) compliance with federal National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) and Endangered Species Act requirements, and 3) a 29 CFR §1910.120 compliant site-specific health and safety plan.	
Schedule: QAPP update: complete by 1/2027. Phase I ESAs: 4-5/year during grant term; Phase II ESAs: 1-2/year during the grant term; RBM surveys: 1-2/year during grant term.	
Outputs: Eligibility forms; QAPP and SAPs; Access agreements; Health and Safety Plans; Site selection documentation; Phase I and II ESA reports, RBM reports.	
Task 4: Cleanup & Reuse Planning	Lead: Trinidad with support of QEP
Implementation: The City plans to develop 5 site-specific cleanup and/or reuse plans. These will be customized for	

the needs of each site and may include remediation plans/cost estimates, Analyses of Brownfield Cleanup Alternatives (ABCAs), community reuse visioning, redevelopment roadmaps, and/or market analyses to evaluate reuse feasibility. The City plans to develop one Area-Wide Plan that will complement existing downtown and River Walk plans, filling data gaps, engaging the community, and providing actionable steps to meet revitalization goals.

Schedule: The City anticipates completing five site specific cleanup/reuse plans and one area wide plan through the grant term.

Outputs: Five site-specific brownfield cleanup and/or reuse plans, one area wide plan.

3.e. Cost Estimates: The scope of work is divided into four tasks as shown in the table below. QEP costs are based on an assumed average QEP rate of \$165/hour. To maximize the number of outputs completed during the project, the City has chosen not to seek personnel and fringe or indirect cost reimbursement for its management of the project.

Budget Categories		Project Tasks (\$)					Total
		Task 1	Task 2	Task 3	Task 4	Administrative Costs	
Direct Costs	Personnel	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	Fringe Benefits	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	Travel	\$7,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$7,000
	Equipment	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	Supplies	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	Contractual	\$28,875	\$24,750	\$287,700	\$150,075	\$0	\$491,400
	Construction	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	Other (Conference fees)	\$1,600	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,600
Total Direct Costs		\$37,475	\$24,750	\$287,700	\$150,075	\$0	\$500,000
Indirect Costs		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Budget (Total Direct Costs + Indirect Costs)		\$37,475	\$24,750	\$287,700	\$150,075	\$0	\$500,000

Task 1: CA Oversight and Reporting (\$37,475): Travel: \$7,000 (two City personnel attend one national and one regional brownfield conference [airfare to conferences \$550/person = \$2,200]; travel to airport, hotel, meals, ride share [3 days per conference per person, 12 days total = \$400/day or \$4,800 total]). Other: Conference registration fees: \$1,600 (2 national and 2 regional conferences @ \$400 per conference). Contractual: \$28,875 (175 hours for reporting and project management).

Task 2: Community Engagement (\$24,750): Contractual: \$24,750 (150 hours for meeting planning, attendance, input evaluation, and outreach material preparation).

Task 3: Phase I and II ESAs (\$287,770) Contractual: \$287,700 (Phase I ESAs [including eligibility form and access agreement] \$82,500 [15 x \$5,500/each]), (QAPP \$4,950 [30 hours]), (Phase II ESAs including SAPs/Eligibility Determinations \$150,325 [5 x \$30,065 including 105 hours labor, \$5,000 lab testing and \$7,740 for drilling, utility locates, and investigation-derived waste disposal]), and (RBM Surveys \$49,925 [5 x \$9,985 each - 55 labor hours + \$910 lab testing]). A total of 57.5% of grant funding has been budgeted for Phase I and II ESAs.

Task 4: Cleanup/Reuse Planning (\$150,075): Contractual: \$150,075 (Site Specific Cleanup and/or Reuse Plans – 5 plans x \$15,015 ea. or \$75,075 total [91 hours x 5 plans = 455 hours]; Area Wide Plan – 1 x \$75,000 ea. [454.5 hours x 1 plan]). A total of 30% of grant funding has been budgeted for Cleanup/Reuse Planning.

3.f. Plan to Measure and Evaluate Environmental Progress and Results: The City will track project outputs (number of ESAs, outreach events and materials, quarterly reports, cleanup and reuse plans) and summarize them in each quarterly progress report and in ACRES (as appropriate). The City will select outcomes to track that relate directly to goals established in local plans outlined in Section 1.b.i. The City anticipates tracking outcomes related to grant funded work such as: number of new affordable housing units underway/completed on brownfields; number of vacant buildings reused; number of new businesses on former brownfields; volume of hazardous building materials identified/abated; vacancy reduction in downtown Aguilar and Trinidad; new businesses on Target Area brownfields supporting arts and tourism; services located on brownfields to serve environmental justice communities; and funding leveraged. Outcome metrics to be measured will be listed in the Work Plan and progress will be reviewed at least quarterly through the grant term. Progress toward achieving the outputs and outcomes, and any corrective

steps required to maintain the Work Plan commitments and timeline, will be presented in quarterly reports, and entered in ACRES.

4. PROGRAMMATIC CAPABILITY AND PAST PERFORMANCE: Programmatic Capability, 4.a.

Organizational Capacity 4.b. Organizational Structure, and 4.c. Description of Key Staff: The City of Trinidad has experience with management, compliance, and property redevelopment support through management of FY15 and FY21 EPA Brownfield Coalition Assessment Grants and a FY21 EPA Brownfield Cleanup Grant. With resources in planning, project management, grant management, and finance, the City has ample capacity to manage another EPA Brownfield Grant as they have previously demonstrated. The project organizational structure will include Nicholas Mason, City Planner as Project Director. Nick will oversee project contractors, communicate with EPA, ensure compliance with the grant terms and conditions, and monitor project outputs and outcomes to ensure alignment with goals. Nick has 8 years of project management experience, including 2 years at the City of Trinidad managing and successfully closing out the FY21 EPA Brownfield Assessment and Cleanup grants. Nicholas will be supported by Tara Marshall, City Manager, who has 15 years of experience in municipal and state government economic development and land use roles, including over seven years of experience managing EPA Brownfield grants. Nick will also be supported by Sarah Cart, City Finance Director, who has over 15 years of experience in finance.

Nick can leverage the City's relevant experience as needed including additional planning, geographic information systems (GIS), finance, and support staff. The City conducts succession planning to ensure that if project staff are no longer available, appropriate replacements can be found with aligning qualifications and experience. Nick will also manage procurement of a QEP with the technical and land use planning experience to develop the assessment, cleanup planning, and reuse planning deliverables and assist with project management and community engagement.

4.d. Acquiring Additional Resources: The City has a procurement ordinance and policy governing purchases of goods and services that sets forth the competitive selection processes. The City will comply with EPA's solicitation clauses (2CFR Part 200 and 2CFR Part 1500) in the performance of this grant. The City reviews contracts and agreements and its procurement staff facilitate purchase orders and payments. The City will utilize the required procurement procedures in selecting a QEP and remediation contractor to complete grant work.

Past Performance and Accomplishments: 4.e. Currently Has or Previously Received an EPA Brownfields Grant: 4.e.(1) Accomplishments:

In FY15, the City of Trinidad and coalition partners Aguilar and Las Animas County received a \$500K Brownfields Coalition Assessment Grant. The Coalition developed brownfield inventories, Phase I and II ESAs, and cleanup planning documents and conducted community outreach to encourage local input. The City completed 10 Phase I ESAs and 10 Phase II ESAs/RBM Surveys. A key outcome was the 15-acre La Puerta Site, where assessments leveraged \$20M+ in private investment. La Puerta ("The Gateway" to Trinidad) is now developed with the Trinidad Visitor Center, a restaurant, and an 84-room Hilton Hotel, creating over 80 jobs. The program also advanced the Fox Theater through Phase I and II ESAs, leveraging a \$500K EPA Brownfield Cleanup Grant and a \$108,000 CDPHE Brownfield Cleanup Grant.

The City's FY21 EPA Brownfields Assessment and Cleanup Grants have further advanced key downtown projects. The City completed 8 Phase I ESAs, 12 Phase II ESAs/RBM Surveys and an Area-Wide Downtown Revitalization Plan. Assessment and cleanup planning at the Holy Trinity Convent and School supported a successful EPA Cleanup Grant that has prepared 53,477 SF building for reuse. The building is now being redeveloped into a mixed-use project with apartments, a hostel, and a bar/restaurant. Similarly, the Fox West Theatre has completed hazardous materials abatement as of 2025, making 20,330 SF of vacant historic downtown building space redevelopment-ready. Plans are moving forward to restore the Fox Theatre as a 650-seat venue with retail and event spaces to position the site as a catalytic anchor for downtown revitalization and arts-based economic development.

4.e.(2) Compliance with Grant Requirements:

All the City's past EPA Brownfields Grants have been successfully closed out. The City successfully administered its FY15 and FY21 grants in full compliance with Work Plans and Cooperative Agreement terms and conditions and made and reported measurable progress toward grant objectives. The City established and maintained an effective working relationship with the EPA Project Officer that ensured continued compliance and timely completion of grant activities. The City engaged community stakeholders, developers, and local agencies to ensure grant funds were used strategically and in accordance with EPA requirements. All FY15 grant funds were fully expended or formally obligated in compliance with EPA guidelines, and FY21 grant activities were implemented as planned.

THRESHOLD CRITERIA RESPONSES

EPA Brownfield Community-Wide Assessment Grant Application

City of Trinidad, Colorado

1. APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY:

(a) Applicant Type: City Government

(b) Eligibility: The City Trinidad is a “general purpose unit of local government” as defined in 2 CFR 200.64 and, therefore, eligible to receive EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant funding.

2. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT: The City of Trinidad has a strong track record of community engagement through its FY15 and FY21 EPA Brownfield Assessment Coalition Grants and its FY21 EPA Brownfield Cleanup Grant. These efforts will continue and expand with the new FY26 grant funding.

Public involvement for this FY26 application began when the City announced its intent to apply at the Planning Commission meeting in early January 2026. Upon award, the City will host a public kickoff event and conduct at least three additional outreach events during the grant period to inform residents and gather input. The City has demonstrated success in communicating complex project information and incorporating community feedback through tools such as electronic polling, event-based surveys, and interactive workshops and charrettes. To support ongoing engagement, the City will prepare fact sheets, press releases, and dedicated webpages to share project updates and resources.

The City will continue informing and involving the community throughout the grant project. At the start of the grant, the City will develop a new Community Involvement Plan outlining engagement tools, virtual participation options, and a schedule of outreach activities. Community input will be compiled quarterly and responses will be prepared as needed. Summaries of public input and the City’s responses will be included in quarterly progress reports and posted on the project webpage.

3. EXPENDITURE OF EXISTING GRANT FUNDS: The City of Trinidad has fully closed out all previous EPA Brownfield Grants and no funding remains. This includes the FY15 EPA Brownfield Assessment Coalition Grant, the FY21 EPA Brownfield Assessment Coalition Grant, and the FY21 Brownfield Cleanup Grant.

4. CONTRACTORS AND NAMED SUBRECIPIENTS: The City of Trinidad affirms that no contractor has been procured for this project and no subrecipients have been named.