

# Fort Belknap Indian Community



Fort Belknap Agency  
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Harlem, Montana 59526-9455  
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Fort Belknap Indian Community  
(Tribal Govt.)  
Fort Belknap Indian Community  
(Elected to administer the affairs of the community and  
to represent the Assiniboiné and the Gros Ventre  
Tribes of the Fort Belknap Indian Reservation)

## Fort Belknap Indian Community FY26 Brownfields Community-Wide Assessment Grant Application Narrative Information Sheet

1. Applicant Identification: Fort Belknap Indian Community (FBIC)  
656 Agency Main Street  
Harlem, Montana 59526-9455
2. Website URL: <https://ftbelknap.org>
3. Funding Requested:  
**Grant Type:** Community-Wide Assessment  
**Federal Funds Requested:** \$500,000.00
4. Location: Fort Belknap Indian Reservation, Montana
5. Target Area and Priority Site Information:  
Our service area includes the Fort Belknap Indian Reservation. Our target area for this grant is Fort Belknap Agency. Please note that Fort Belknap Agency does not have its own post office, so our mailing addresses for sites within the Agency show as Harlem, MT on the below table due to the postal zip code. Please see the attached map showing our priority sites.

Site Name	Address	City, State, Zip
Water Treatment Plant Holding Ponds	103 Agency Main Street	Harlem, MT 59526
Former BIA Transportation Yard	215 Hopi Street	Harlem, MT 59526
Former Shooting Range	Water Plant Road	Harlem, MT 59526
Open Dump Site	Water Plant Road	Harlem, MT 59526
Abandoned Homes	Various Addresses	Harlem, MT 59526

6. Contacts:  
**Project Director:**  
Ina L. Nez Perce – Environmental Manager  
Fort Belknap Indian Community (FBIC)  
656 Agency Main Street, Harlem, MT 59526  
406.353.8429

[inperce@ftbelknap.org](mailto:inperce@ftbelknap.org)

**Chief Executive/Highest Ranking Elected Official:**

Randall Werk Sr. – Tribal Council President

Fort Belknap Indian Community (FBIC)

656 Agency Main Street, Harlem, MT 59526

406.353.8310

[randall.werk@ftbelknap.org](mailto:randall.werk@ftbelknap.org)

7. Population (source: [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov))

Fort Belknap Indian Community has 4,330 enrolled tribal members who live on or near the Reservation. The town of Fort Belknap Agency has a population of 1,567 people.

8. Other Factors

<b>Other Factors</b>	<b>Page #</b>
Community population is 15,000 or less.	
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).	
The priority site(s) is in a federally designated flood plain.	
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.	
The proposed project will improve local resilience to the impacts of extreme weather events and natural disasters.	
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).	
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:

According to the grant guidelines, a letter from the Fort Belknap Environmental Office is not required since the Fort Belknap Indian Community is the applicant.

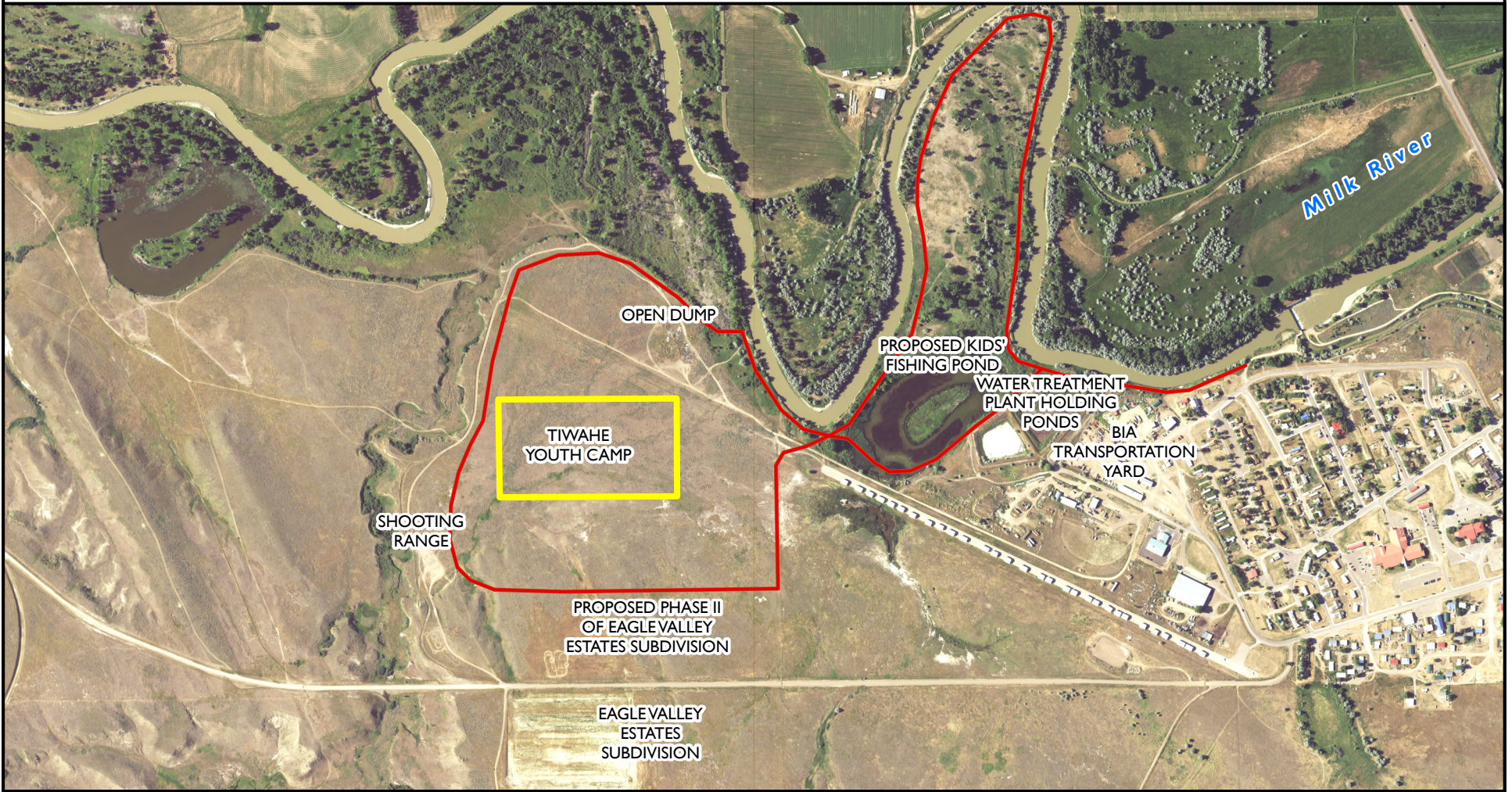
10. Releasing Copies of Applications

Not Applicable – The application does not have confidential, privileged, or sensitive information.

**Narrative Information Sheet Attachment**

Map of Priority Sites

Figure 1 - CWAG Site Map  
Fort Belknap Indian Community  
Fort Belknap Agency, Montana



— Proposed Recreational Trail



## **Narrative and Ranking Criteria**

## **1. PROJECT AREA DESCRIPTION AND PLANS FOR REVITALIZATION**

### **Target Area and Brownfields**

#### **a. Overview of Brownfield Challenges and Description of Target Area**

The Fort Belknap Indian Community (FBIC) is applying for a \$500,000 EPA Brownfields Community-Wide Assessment Grant to assess sites within the Fort Belknap Indian Reservation. Established in 1888, the Fort Belknap Indian Reservation (Reservation) is home to the Gros Ventre (*Aaniiih*) and Assiniboine (*Nakoda*) Tribes. Together, the tribes have formed and maintained a community that has a deep respect for its land, culture, and heritage. FBIC has 8,660 enrolled tribal members, and the Fort Belknap Reservation has a total population of 3,382 residents.<sup>1</sup> The Reservation encompasses 700,000 acres approximately 40 miles south of the Canadian border in north central Montana. Historically, the Aaniiih and Nakoda were nomadic hunters and warriors following the buffalo, which provided our people with the necessities of life. Today, the main industry on the Reservation is agriculture, including small cattle ranches, irrigated alfalfa fields, and dry-land farming. The target area for our Brownfield assessment activities includes the community of Fort Belknap Agency (Agency), the largest of four communities within the Reservation boundary. Agency has a population of 1,567 people<sup>2</sup> and is the home of the tribal government, primary Tribal services, and Aaniiih Nakoda College.

Brownfields sites are prevalent throughout our Reservation in the form of vacant and blighted homes and tribal buildings, informal dumping grounds, former gas stations, cattle dip vat stations, and automobile and equipment repair facilities. Life on our Reservation is difficult due to persistent poverty and our isolated and remote location. Our tribal government and residents do not have the funds to maintain, renovate, or clean up contaminated properties on our Reservation. As a result, numerous buildings sit vacant and lands suspected of legacy contamination remain unaddressed. Despite our challenges, we are hopeful and committed to a better future, which will be realized in part through redevelopment of Brownfield sites to serve the needs of our people and cultivate culture and connection with visitors to our Reservation as well as among our youth. Award of an EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant will allow FBIC to create a three-mile recreational trail system, kids' fishing pond, youth cultural camp, enhance cultural awareness and education, offer health enhancing events, and remodel 10 new homes for family occupancy.

#### **b. Description of the Priority Brownfield Site(s)**

Previous Brownfield grants have allowed us to successfully clean up and remove 30 Fort Belknap Runway homes as well as the Former Water Treatment Plant. Our priority sites for this grant represent a geographic continuation of our cleanup efforts in the target area and are adjacent to both the Runway and the Water Treatment Plant sites. Assessment and cleanup of our priority sites would allow us to build on the momentum we've established with the cleanup of the other two sites and take a more compressive planning approach to the target area.

*Water Treatment Plant Holding Ponds* – Located directly north and adjacent to the Former Water Treatment Plant are two 6.5-acre holding ponds that have not been assessed or cleaned up. These ponds are likely contaminated with disinfection byproducts such as trihalomethanes and haloacetic acids, which may have resulted from treatment of fluids and solids in the ponds. The ponds are located 100 feet from the Milk River, the primary source of drinking water for Agency and the surrounding Reservation area. The tribes would like to create a recreational path along the Milk River, but the holding ponds will prevent wildlife and visitors from using the trail system. The ponds are also located 50 feet from a backwater slough, fed from the Milk River, which the tribes would like to use as a kids' fishing pond. The fishing pond would have platforms and railings to allow kids to fish easily and with instruction.

<sup>1</sup> [https://data.census.gov/profile/Fort\\_Belknap\\_Reservation\\_and\\_Off-Reservation\\_Trust\\_Land,\\_MT?g=2500000US1150](https://data.census.gov/profile/Fort_Belknap_Reservation_and_Off-Reservation_Trust_Land,_MT?g=2500000US1150)

<sup>2</sup> [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)

Former BIA Transportation Yard – Adjacent to and east of the holding ponds and approximately 85 feet from the Milk River is the former Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Transportation Yard. BIA reportedly used the site for large truck repair, vehicle maintenance, storage, and vehicle fueling. It is unknown whether BIA operated underground storage tanks at the site, but petroleum contamination is a concern for the FBIC, who now owns the property. FBIC would like to extend the recreational path along the river on this site but cannot proceed with any construction until potential petroleum releases to soils and groundwater have been evaluated.

Runway Open Dump Area – East of the slough and along the Milk River lies an open dump area at the end of the Fort Belknap Runway, a previous Brownfield cleanup site. The proposed recreational trail would run through this site. In addition to the proposed trail system, the FBIC Tiwahe Program is currently one of ten programs in the nation and offers a youth cultural camp in the summers for middle-school and high-school students adjacent to and south of the open dump area. Tiwahe would like to expand the camp and its cultural and recreational opportunities but cannot move forward with these plans due to the threat of contamination and debris from the open dump site affecting youth attending the camp.

Former Shooting Range – West of the Tiwahe camp site and north of the new Eagle Valley Estates housing subdivision lies a former shooting range. The range was used by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Fort Belknap Law Enforcement, community members, and tribal groups for recreational target practice for numerous years. The proposed recreational trail system would continue through this site as well. Local residents using the walking trail, children living in homes at Eagle Valley Estates, and youth recreating at the Tiwahe camp will all be encountering soils from the former shooting range, FBIC would like surface soils evaluated for metals to ensure the site is safe for the community.

Abandoned Homes – Numerous abandoned homes lie throughout Agency. FBIC's Foster Care program has approached the environmental department and would like these homes to be assessed for asbestos, lead-based paint, methamphetamine, and universal wastes. The foster program has willing foster parents, but the program must show their home sites meet federal foster housing requirements and are safe for children. Assessing and cleaning up these homes will allow FBIC to create more suitable foster housing within our community to care for our youngest tribal members.

#### c. Identifying Additional Sites

FBIC currently has a site inventory of 26 sites located within our Reservation boundary with 18 of these sites located in the target area. If funds remain after assessing the sites located within our target areas, including our priority sites, we will consider projects within our greater project area which includes all of the Fort Belknap Indian Reservation. To solicit community input on additional sites not yet on our site inventory, we will present program updates to Tribal Council and request information and suggestions on additional sites in need of assessment. We will also work with the Natural Resources Committee to get input on priority sites that may pose concerns to human health and safety. We will also convene with the FBIC Planning Department to identify sites that may yield economic benefits for the tribes and our communities. When selecting additional sites, we will prioritize projects based on redevelopment plans, community need, feasibility of cleanup and reuse, and community partners involved in the project.

#### **Revitalization of the Target Area**

##### d. Reuse Strategy and Alignment with Revitalization Plans

The redevelopment of our priority sites aligns with FBIC's 2025 Tribal Strategic Focus document as well as our EDA-approved 2026-2030 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). One of FBIC's Strategic Core Values listed in our CEDS is "Cultural Revitalization". A new, 3-mile recreational trail system along the holding ponds, former BIA transportation yard, open dump site, and former shooting range will include signage identifying native plants, animals, and habitat in our native Aaniiih and Nakoda languages, fostering cultural

awareness and appreciation among our people. The FBIC Seeds for Success Program, a collaborative program between FBIC, the Bureau of Land Management, and the Society for Ecological Restoration, will provide native plant seeds to encourage native plant growth throughout the area. The expansion of the Tiwahe youth camp located between the Runway Open Dump site and the former Shooting Range will achieve the goal of cultural revitalization by offering educational cultural courses and activities, including teepee raising, traditional plant identification, parfleche painting, beading, cooking, and traditional games. The Tiwahe program is a federally funded program designed to help tribes foster connectedness and healthy lifestyles so our community may be self-sufficient, prosper and thrive. The program teaches traditional tribal perspectives, values, and understanding, and focuses on the belief in the connection among all living things, in the importance of family and community, and in a holistic approach to life. Expansion of the Tiwahe camp will be an investment in the relationship, health, and wellness of our children, youth, and families.

Two additional Strategic Core Values listed in our CEDS include “Community Well-Being” and “Economic Prosperity”. The introduction of a 3-mile recreational trail will provide the opportunity for residents to walk and run in a scenic area designed to connect them with nature and tribal culture. Currently, the target area does not have access to a gym, workout facility, or wellness center, so residents walk and run back and forth down the dilapidated airport runway to exercise. The new trail system and kids’ fishing pond will also create additional economic prosperity opportunities. The trail system will allow our community to host 5k fun runs, cross-country meets, and kids’ races that will bring in visitors from the surrounding region. The creation of a kids’ fishing pond will also invite both residents within the tribal community as well as visitors to participate in kids’ fishing derbies, fishing education and instructional clinics, and additional recreation on our Reservation. Our tribes have a severe housing shortage and need to redevelop homes within the target area that were constructed prior to 1990, as noted in our CEDS. One of the primary goals identified to enhance and support physical infrastructure on the Reservation is to invest in our vacant and blighted housing stock. The assessment, cleanup, and redevelopment of vacant homes within the target area will help meet this need while also providing greater community well-being by offering locations for safe foster homes.

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

The creation of a new, 3-mile recreational trail system will include a greenway and park amenities, including benches, cultural signage in native languages, and opportunities for economic income as a result of fun runs, cross-country meets, kids’ races, and other community events. The creation of a kids’ fishing pond will bring in visitor income for fishing derbies and instructional clinics for children. It is estimated that these types of events could bring in an additional \$20,000 to the tribes each year. The redevelopment of 10 foster homes will help provide safe living spaces for approximately 20-40 children. The expansion of the Tiwahe Youth Cultural Camps will help instill an appreciation and connection for our tribal heritage, culture, and ancestry for approximately 30 additional children. Cleanup of the former Water Treatment Plant holding ponds, the former BIA Transportation Yard, and the Open Dump site will improve our resilience in response to extreme weather events. For example, if the Milk River floods or we have a severe wind event, contaminants in the holding ponds, surface and subsurface soils, and groundwater will no longer be transported across our wetlands and recreational areas where our youth play and learn. The proximity of the former Shooting Range makes the site a potential candidate for a solar energy farm that could help offset energy costs for the neighboring Eagle Valley Estates subdivision, and the tribes are currently evaluating the feasibility of this renewable energy option.

### **Strategy for Leveraging Resources**

#### f. Resources Needed for Site Reuse

Once assessment is completed at the priority sites, FBIC will secure funding for cleanup and redevelopment through state and federal sources. FBIC will apply for EPA Brownfields Cleanup Grant funds for all sites that

require remediation following assessment. Funding for additional cleanup and redevelopment will be secured through the Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks (FWP) Community Pond Program Grants, which provide up to \$40,000 for the establishment of kids' fishing ponds. The 3-mile recreational trail system will be funded through the Montana Department of Transportation Alternatives program and the Tribal Transportation Program, which both fund the development of recreational trails. Cultural awareness and Native language signage along the trail system will be funded by the Administration for Native American Language Preservation and Maintenance Program. Funding for the creation of the Tiwahe youth camp would first come through the Bureau of Indian Affairs Tiwahe program, which is increasing tribal funding for family strengthening, prevention, and cultural connection. Funding may also be secured through the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMSA) "Native Connections" Tribal Behavioral Health Program, which would support camp-based prevention, youth leadership, and mentoring. Funding for the renovations on the vacant homes would come from Fort Belknap Tribal Housing Authority and the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Indian Community Development Block Grant program, which helps provide affordable housing.

#### g. Use of Existing Infrastructure

The creation of a recreational trail system and kids' fishing pond will not require additional infrastructure. If lighting or bathroom facilities are implemented along the trail system, these connections are accessible at the former Water Treatment Plant site or the former BIA Transportation Yard. Redevelopment of 10 housing units will use existing infrastructure as well. Currently, the Tiwahe camp plans to operate without electricity or water; however, if these plans change in the future, water and sewer/septic would need to be extended to the camp location.

## **2. COMMUNITY NEED AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

### **Community Need**

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

FBIC is heavily reliant on financial assistance through state and federal programs, such as Brownfields, due to our small population size and low median household income rate. The Fort Belknap Reservation has a total population of 3,382 residents<sup>3</sup>, and our target area for this project, Fort Belknap Agency, has a population of only 1,567 residents<sup>4</sup>. While the U.S. Census Bureau does not have income data specifically for Fort Belknap Agency itself, its data shows median household income for the Reservation is \$50,833, which is 32.5% lower than the median household income for the rest of Montana (\$75,340) and 37.7% lower than the national median household income (\$81,604). Additionally, census data shows only 43% of Fort Belknap Agency's population is of working age (19-64), and the town has an employment rate of only 28.6% (compared to average state and national employment rates of ~61%). The combination of the town's small population combined with low median household incomes and low employment rates has resulted in nearly 36% of Fort Belknap Agency residents living in persistent poverty, which is significantly higher than the Montana state average of 10.2% and national average of 12.1%. Furthermore, due to the unique relationship Reservation residents have with the United States government and its treaty obligations, FBIC does not tax its members. Ultimately, FBIC's small pool of discretionary funding must be allocated to critical infrastructure and health/safety needs, leaving no funding available for environmental assessment and subsequent redevelopment projects for the numerous Brownfield sites in our community.

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<sup>3</sup> [https://data.census.gov/profile/Fort\\_Belknap\\_Reservation\\_and\\_Off-Reservation\\_Trust\\_Land\\_MT?g=2500000US1150](https://data.census.gov/profile/Fort_Belknap_Reservation_and_Off-Reservation_Trust_Land_MT?g=2500000US1150)

<sup>4</sup> [https://data.census.gov/profile/Fort\\_Belknap\\_Agency\\_CDP\\_Montana?g=160XX00US3027850](https://data.census.gov/profile/Fort_Belknap_Agency_CDP_Montana?g=160XX00US3027850)

### b. Health or Welfare of Sensitive Populations

Assessment, cleanup, and redevelopment of our priority sites will benefit those most vulnerable in our community, including our Indigenous and adolescent populations. American Indians account for 96% of our target area's population and nearly 40% of all residents are youth under the age of 18. Socioeconomic data from the U.S. Census Bureau suggests significant welfare concerns for these sensitive groups. For example, 26% of Indigenous residents in our target area manage a disability, compared to only 14-16% of both their Indigenous and white counterparts throughout all of Montana. Additionally, 20% of the target area's population lacks health insurance (compared to only 8.4% across the rest of the state), leaving sensitive populations more vulnerable to chronic disease and premature death. In 2024, the National Council of Urban Indian Health estimated the life expectancy for American Indians was only 65.2 years compared to 76.4 years for the non-Hispanic white population<sup>5</sup>. Children in the target area face even higher health and welfare threats considering 40% of adolescent residents in the target area live in poverty (compared to the state average of 11%). Obesity has been linked to an increased risk of diabetes, and being American Indian (AI) is a primary risk factor for type-2 diabetes. Although Montana ranks 46<sup>th</sup> in the nation for overall prevalence of childhood obesity, a University of Montana study showed approximately 57% of AI youth ages 5-19 years old were obese on rural Montana Indian reservations. Evidence suggests increased daily physical activity can reduce obesity risk factors for AI youth.<sup>6</sup> Assessment, cleanup, and redevelopment of our Brownfields sites will help create a 3-mile trail system to combat obesity, a kids' fishing pond to promote youth and adult recreation, an expanded Tiwahe youth camp to offer kids opportunities to connect with our culture, ancestors, our land, and our water, and 10 safe housing units, thereby creating opportunities for healthier living and more activity for our children and our people.

### c. Greater Than Normal Incidence of Disease and Adverse Health Conditions

Brownfield sites and contaminants found therein have led to health concerns for residents within our target area. Petroleum releases, which are suspected at the BIA Transportation Yard site, have high levels of benzene known to cause leukemia and other cancers. According to the Montana Department of Health and Human Services (DPHHS), cancer rates among American Indian populations are 35% higher than among white populations in Montana. This Montana American Indian-White Incidence Rate Ratio (IRR) is significantly higher for certain types of cancers such as liver (284%), stomach (207%), kidney (166%), and lung (110%)<sup>7</sup>. Considering 96% of our target area's population is American Indian, our community is disproportionately impacted by cancer rates than the rest of the state. DPHHS also reported that lung cancer was significantly more prevalent within the Fort Belknap Reservation than would be expected among white communities in the same region<sup>8</sup>. The primary contaminant of concern at our abandoned homes is asbestos in building materials. Asbestos is a potent carcinogen associated with increased lung cancer incidence. Its presence is especially hazardous to populations with existing respiratory disparities, including those suffering from asthma or other immunocompromising conditions. Furthermore, according to the 2024 Montana Asthma Burden Report, the region encompassing the Fort Belknap Reservation suffers from the state's highest asthma rates, with prevalence among both youth and adult American Indian populations exceeding that of their white counterparts. Completing environmental assessment activities through this grant will reduce our community's risk of exposure to toxic and hazardous materials and help combat the already greater-than-normal rates of cancer and asthma impacting our residents.

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<sup>5</sup> [https://ncuih.org/2024/06/07/life-expectancy-rates-for-american-indian-and-alaska-native-people-dropped-drastically-during-the-covid-19-pandemic/#:~:text=Currently%2C%20the%20life%20expectancy%20for,same%20year%20\(76.4%20years\)](https://ncuih.org/2024/06/07/life-expectancy-rates-for-american-indian-and-alaska-native-people-dropped-drastically-during-the-covid-19-pandemic/#:~:text=Currently%2C%20the%20life%20expectancy%20for,same%20year%20(76.4%20years))

<sup>6</sup> [https://mtprof.msun.edu/Spr2015/diabetes.html?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com](https://mtprof.msun.edu/Spr2015/diabetes.html?utm_source=chatgpt.com)

<sup>7</sup> Montana DPHHS. 2018-2022 Cancer in Montana: Featuring Physical Inactivity-Associated Cancers in Montana. July, 2025.

<sup>8</sup> Montana DPHHS, Montana Chronic Disease Prevention & Health Promotion Bureau. Cancer on the Fort Belknap Reservation. Updated October 2024.

**d. Economically Impoverished/Disproportionately Impacted Populations**

The Nakoda and Aaniiih place significant value on water, which is associated with our cultural identity and spiritual beliefs. Water symbolizes life, sustenance, and a prosperous future for our people. Over the last 30 years, our waters have been threatened by commercial operations. Gold mining activities from the mid-to-late 1900s in the Zortman-Landusky area on the south end of the Reservation contaminated Reservation water resources with heavy metals, cyanide, and acid mine drainage. After two decades of remediation efforts, the Montana DEQ determined impacted waterways would need treatment indefinitely. Prior to the mining, FBIC residents relied on these water resources that have now been deemed unsafe for consumption or use. On the north end of our Reservation in Fort Belknap Agency, we are concerned that chemical use in the wastewater treatment ponds as well as petroleum use at the former BIA transportation station may be affecting surface waters that are directly adjacent to the Milk River and may further contaminate our people’s water. Assessment of the wastewater ponds and the transportation station will help address surface water issues that may be harming our area’s wildlife, habitat, and people. Due to our small population and our high rates of poverty, the tribes do not have any other funding available to assess these sites and their impacts to neighboring wetlands and watersheds without the help of an EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant.

**Community Engagement**

**e. Project Involvement and f. Project Roles**

FBIC strives to collaborate with local partners and community leaders throughout every aspect of community development projects. Specific project partners, their roles, and how they will support site assessment and cleanup/redevelopment planning activities through FBIC’s Brownfield Program are outlined in the table below:

<b>Select Project Partners</b>		
<b>Partner</b>	<b>Point of Contact</b>	<b>Specific Role in Project</b>
Tribal Planning Department	Delina Cuts The Rope, Planning Director 406.353.8435 delina.cutstherope@ftbelknap.org	Secure funding for site redevelopment; Incorporate Brownfields discussions into public meetings hosted by the Planning Department
Tribal Council/Admin	Ina Nez Perce, CAO 406.353.8450 inperce@ftbelknap.org	Input and final approval on property use, funding applications, and overarching economic development strategies
Tribal Natural Resources Department	Randall Werk, Sr, President 406.353.8310 Randall.werk@ftbelknap.org	Input on protection of surface waters, wildlife habitat, and responsible use strategies.
Tiwahe	Ramona Horn, Family Advocacy Coordinator 406.353.8361 Ramona.horn@ftbelknap.org	Input on creating opportunities for youth educational programming and needs for neighboring youth camp
FBIC Immersion School	Sean Chandler, President 406.353.3902 schandler@ancollege.edu	Input on creating opportunities for youth educational programming, field days, day camps, fishing and recreational camps.
FBIC Boys and Girls Club	Director 406.399.1759	Input on creating opportunities for youth educational programming, field days, day camps, fishing and recreational camps.

**g. Incorporating Community Input**

Since the inception of our Brownfields Program in 2001, FBIC has prioritized community involvement and stakeholder engagement to guide and inform redevelopment projects. For this assessment grant, we plan to incorporate community input by hosting 4 public meetings and holding regular stakeholder sessions with tribal leaders, key tribal department managers, and other pertinent community members and organizations. Project updates will be shared regularly on our website and social media pages, and our Environmental Protection Department’s quarterly newsletter will include regular progress updates. Following project completion, we will

create a fact sheet describing the assessment activities completed and highlighting redevelopment plans to share with the community.

The public meeting will be held in a centrally located, ADA-accessible facility in Fort Belknap Agency to best encourage attendance and accommodate any mobility limitations. Sight and hearing concerns will also be accommodated, as needed, through large print publications and sign language interpretations, and materials will be translated into the native White Clay language upon request. The meeting will offer flexible attendance formats including in-person and online options, encouraging higher attendance. Notes will be taken at all meetings, and community comments, questions, and responses will be recorded in meeting minutes. All comments received during the meeting or subsequent 30-day public comment period will be carefully reviewed and considered, and the FBIC Environmental Protection Department will provide written responses to each comment or question.

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

#### **Description of Tasks/Activities and Outputs**

***Task 1 – Grant Management*** – **a. Project Implementation** – FBIC will be responsible for hiring a Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP) within two months of award; routinely updating their Brownfields site inventory; prioritizing sites using their Site Priority Matrix tool; coordinating with landowners and developers, local governments, EPA, and DEQ; meeting with the Brownfields Steering Committee quarterly; updating project information in the Assessment, Cleanup, and Redevelopment Exchange System (ACRES) quarterly; preparing EPA quarterly reports; completing annual financial reports; finalizing and submitting a final grant closeout report; attending two EPA National Brownfields Conferences and 2 Brownfields Regional Workshops; and general program management. **b. Anticipated Project Schedule** – October 2026 – September 2030 **c. Task/Activity Lead** – FBIC (grantee) **d. Outputs** – 1 QEP contract; 16 ACRES updates and quarterly reports; 1 final closeout report; 4 annual financial reports; 2 national conferences and 2 regional workshops attended.

***Task 2 – Community Outreach*** – **a. Project Implementation** – FBIC and the selected QEP will be responsible for creating a community outreach plan; maintaining FBIC’s Brownfields webpage; sharing quarterly social media updates; preparing fact sheets and a programmatic brochure; fostering relationships with regional developers; consulting with participating landowners; creating opportunities to engage the local press; and hosting public meetings. **b. Anticipated Project Schedule** – October 2026 – September 2030 **c. Task/Activity Lead** – FBIC with assistance from their QEP, as directed **d. Outputs** – 1 community outreach plan; 1 updated website; 16 social media updates; 4 fact sheets; 1 programmatic brochure; 6 public meetings/workshops; 20+ stakeholder meetings.

***Task 3 – Site Assessment*** – **a. Project Implementation** – FBIC will collect program participation forms prior to beginning an assessment, fill out site eligibility determination forms to submit to DEQ and EPA, and facilitate site access. They will then coordinate with their QEP to update FBIC’s current EPA-approved Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) and complete site-specific assessments. **b. Anticipated Project Schedule** – December 2026 – June 2030 **c. Task/Activity Lead** – FBIC for project coordination tasks and their QEP for all technical tasks, including completing assessments **d. Outputs** – 10+ program participation forms; 10+ approved site eligibility determination forms; 10+ access agreements; 1 updated QAPP; 4 AAI-compliant Phase I ESAs; 10 SAPs; 10 HASPs; 10 Phase II Report of Findings (including abatement cost estimates for hazardous building material sites).

***Task 4 – Cleanup/Reuse Planning*** – **a. Project Implementation** – The QEP will be responsible for identifying cleanup options and costs consistent with redevelopment plans based on site data and community input. The QEP will complete cleanup plans for selected sites to help facilitate redevelopment. Cleanup planning documents may include Analysis of Brownfield Cleanup Alternatives (ABCAs), project designs, clearance SAPs, and bid specifications for each site. Additionally, a conceptual planning contractor will complete a site reuse plan for selected sites, which will describe community outreach, reuse visioning, site renderings and 3-D models, and any

necessary infrastructure needed for a redevelopment project. **b. Anticipated Project Schedule** – October 2027 – September 2030 **c. Task/Activity Lead** – QEP **d. Outputs** – 4 ABCAs, 4 cleanup plans, 4 bid specification documents, 4 conceptual site reuse plans, 4 3-D models, 4 site renderings.

**e. Cost Estimates**

The following table displays our budget breakdown by task for the proposed project with written rationales below. 83% of funding is allocated for site-specific assessment and planning activities.

PROJECT BUDGET					
Budget Categories	Project Tasks (\$)				
	Grant Management	Community Outreach	Site Assessment	Cleanup & Reuse Planning	Total
Personnel	\$33,280	\$8,320	\$0	\$0	\$41,600
Fringe Benefits	\$9,984	\$2,496	\$0	\$0	\$12,480
Travel	\$24,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$24,000
Supplies	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$0	\$0	\$2,000
Contractual	\$0	\$3,120	\$280,800	\$136,000	\$419,920
Total Direct Costs	\$68,264	\$14,936	\$280,800	\$136,000	\$500,000
Indirect Costs	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Total Budget</b>	<b>\$68,264</b>	<b>\$14,936</b>	<b>\$280,800</b>	<b>\$136,000</b>	<b>\$500,000</b>

**Task 1: Grant Management** – Personnel Costs: \$40/hr for 4 hours/week for 4 years = \$33,280; Fringe Benefits: 30% of Personnel Costs = \$9,984; Travel Costs: Assumes sending 2 employees to 2 National Brownfields Conferences and 2 regional workshops with rates of \$700 for airfare + \$300 per night for lodging + \$75/day for per diem for 5 days = \$3,000/employee/conference or workshop for a total of \$24,000; Supplies: \$1,000 for file management supplies such as desktop scanners, printers, and ink.

**Task 2: Community Outreach** – Personnel Costs: \$40/hr for 1 hour/week for 4 years = \$8,320; Fringe Benefits: 30% of Personnel Costs = \$2,496; Supplies: \$1,000 for printing brochures and fact sheets; Contractual Costs: \$130/hr for 6 hours/public meeting for preparation, travel, and attendance of 4 public meetings = \$3,120 for a total of \$14,936.

**Task 3: Site Assessments** – Contractual Costs: Assumes \$2,800 for QAPP Update; \$4,500/Phase I ESA x 4 sites = \$18,000; \$10,000/Residential Phase II Building Materials Investigation x 6 sites = \$60,000; and \$50,000/Phase II and Surface Water Subsurface Investigation x 4 sites = \$200,000 for a total of \$280,000.

**Task 4: Cleanup & Site Reuse Planning** – Contractual Costs: 4 ABCAs at \$3,660 each = \$14,640 + 4 cleanup plans at \$6,540 each = \$26,160 + 4 bid specification documents at \$8,200 each = \$32,800 for a total of \$73,600 for Cleanup Planning; 4 redevelopment plans at \$6,000 each = \$24,000 + 4 3-D redevelopment models including 4 site renderings at \$9,600 each = \$38,400 for a total \$62,400 for Redevelopment Planning. Grand total for task = \$73,600 + \$62,400 = \$136,000.

**f. Plan to Measure and Evaluate Environmental Progress and Results**

Each quarter completed project deliverables and outputs will be compared to our quarterly schedule for the grant and be reported in ACRES. If any obstacles arise in completing a deliverable, we will discuss the situation with our EPA project officer and develop a plan to achieve the output in our workplan. Outcomes will be tracked and measured by quarterly meetings with the FBIC Planning Department, during the project and after the grant has been closed out. Because FBIC owns the properties and will be involved in the redevelopment implementation, the EPD will easily be able to provide updated quarterly information and facts regarding outcomes for the project

such as number of homes ready for occupancy, acres made ready for recreational reuse, number of trail users, and number of children participating ecology, wildlife, and cultural programs.

#### **4. PROGRAMMATIC CAPABILITY AND PAST PERFORMANCE**

##### **Programmatic Capability**

###### **a. Organizational Capacity, b. Organizational Structure, c. Description of Key Staff**

Founded in 1991, FBIC's Environmental Protection Department (EPD) has the experience, capability, and administrative capacity to successfully manage a Brownfields Community-Wide Assessment Grant. The EPD manages an annual budget of over \$2.2 million and operates several programs including FBIC's Brownfields Tribal Response Program and current Brownfields Cleanup Grant projects. FBIC also utilizes public funding from the Bureau of Indian Affairs, U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Department of Energy, and PPL Montana (a local utility company) to support growth and development throughout the Fort Belknap Indian Reservation.

To ensure all grant requirements, objectives, and deadlines are met within the four-year performance period, FBIC will rely on the expertise of Ms. Ina Nez Perce, the EPD Manager. Ms. Nez Perce has led the department since 1992, offering nearly 34 years of experience in program administration, community outreach and engagement, and fund management. She has successfully managed numerous EPA grants from programs including Performance Partnership, Climate Change, Brownfields, and Brownfields Tribal Response. Ms. Nez Perce will direct and assist EPD staff in all aspects of the project including public involvement, contracting and procurement, cleanup planning, fieldwork, and grant administration tasks.

Mr. Adrian Kulbeck, Brownfields Coordinator, will be responsible for the day-to-day operations of the Brownfields Program. Mr. Kulbeck has held this position for the past 2 years and excels at engaging with landowners and project partners, hosting community outreach events, coordinating various grant tasks, and completing grant reporting requirements. He will review all technical grant documents and reports, oversee and manage the selected QEP and abatement contractor(s), and ensure all on-site activities comply with approved QAPPs, SAPs, and FBIC goals. Mr. Kulbeck will provide critical program oversight to ensure grant requirements and project timelines are met throughout the grant performance period.

Mr. Kermit "Dale" Snow, Jr., Environmental Compliance Officer for FBIC's Brownfields Program, will ensure all grant activities comply with both tribal and federal regulations. Mr. Snow has worked for the EPD in various positions since 2001 and is an expert in program administration and contractor management. He will assist with community outreach, contractor oversight, maintaining the site inventory list, serving as a liaison with other tribal departments, and researching site background and information.

Robert Bearcub, Chief Finance Officer for FBIC, will serve as the budget manager for the cleanup grant. Mr. Bearcub is responsible for daily accounting functions and preparation of financial reports consistent with generally accepted accounting principles for all FBIC operations. As recipients of multiple federal grants and state funds, including previously awarded Brownfields grants and Brownfields Tribal Response Program funds, FBIC has implemented internal controls consistent with federal guidance to ensure grant funds are properly managed and recorded. Mr. Bearcub will ensure timely draws of grant funds from ASAP, maintain accurate financial records, and ensure all required financial reporting of grant expenses is completed in a timely manner.

###### **d. Acquiring Additional Resources**

FBIC is committed to promoting strong labor practices, supporting local and disadvantaged businesses, and investing in our local economy. These principles will be maintained throughout all proposed project activities including, but not limited to, procurement of a QEP and solicitation of subcontractors for site-specific assessment and planning activities to ensure an equitable selection process for project partners. Upon receiving a signed

cooperative agreement from EPA, FBIC will hire a QEP to assist with community outreach, Phase I and Phase II assessments, and cleanup and reuse planning tasks. Our QEP procurement will be completed in accordance with tribal and federal laws contained in 2 CFR Part 200. Ms. Nez Perce and Mr. Kulbeck will help prepare and distribute a Request for Proposal, and a non-bias selection committee will review and score submitted proposals prior to selecting a contractor. Using this process, FBIC will be able to obtain the expertise needed to successfully complete all project requirements in a fair and objective manner.

### **Past Performance and Accomplishments**

#### **e. Currently Has or Previously Received an EPA Brownfields Grant**

*(1) Accomplishments* – Over the past 25 years, FBIC has administered a successful Brownfields Program, managing over \$5.95 million in cleanup, assessment, and 128(a) grant funds. Our three most recent grant awards include an FY21 128(a) grant for \$716,628, an FY22 Cleanup Grant for \$500,000, and an FY23 128(a) grant for \$1.55 million. Our FY21 128(a) grant produced the following outputs: 1 Project Design Plan, 1 Community Outreach Plan, 2 Fact Sheets, 2 Public Meetings, 1 ABCA, 1 Clearance SAP, 1 Cleanup Report, abatement of 30 homes on our local runway (airstrip) and 315 tons of regulated asbestos removed. Our FY22 Cleanup Grant will be closed out by June 2026, and we have already produced the following outputs through this grant: 1 Project Design Plan, 1 Community Outreach Plan, 2 Public Meetings, 1 QAPP, 4 ABCAs, 4 Clearance SAPs, 2 Bid Specification Documents, 3 redevelopment community charettes, 1 site redevelopment plan, 2 site renderings, abatement of one former school building, and abatement of a former water treatment plant. Our FY23 128(a) grant is still in progress, and we have already produced the following outputs through this grant: 2 Project Design Plans, 2 Community Outreach Plans, 3 Fact Sheets, 3 Public Meetings, 1 Updated QAPP, 2 ABCAs, 1 Phase II ESA SAP, 1 Phase II Building Materials Investigation, 2 Clearance SAPs, 5 burned home sites abated and removed, 4 homes abated, and 2 Cleanup Reports. Current outcomes from these three most recent grants include: a cleared airstrip where emergency flights and air ambulances can land, 5 homesites ready for new construction, 4 renovated homes for tribal families, a former school building ready to be renovated as a youth and cultural center, and a building to accommodate tribal Disaster and Emergency Service needs.

*(2) Compliance with Grant Requirements* – FBIC has a proven history of completing and exceeding requirements and goals in our Cooperative Agreements and is in good standing with EPA Region 8. Our Brownfields Program has complied with all reporting requirements including the filing of technical reports, quarterly reports, annual financial status and DBE forms, and Program Activity Level forms. All funds have been expended appropriately to achieve the expected grant outputs and outcomes. All site-specific information for assessment and cleanup projects is recorded in ACRES and is continuously updated, as needed, as redevelopment continues. Our FY21 128(a) (10/1/21 -9/30/27) grant remains open and funds are fully allocated to the cleanup of the Old Agency Dump and Sacred Heart Church, which will be completed in Spring 2026. Our FY22 Cleanup Grant (10/1/22 – 9/30/26) was extended by one year because we chose to work with the EPA Land Revitalization Technical Assistance (LRTA) Program to complete community meetings and charettes as well as a redevelopment plan and site renderings for the Lodge Pole School. The LRTA process took a year to complete, which delayed cleanup of the former school. This grant currently has \$48,011 remaining and will be closed out with no additional funds remaining. Our FY23 128(a) funds (10/1/22 – 9/30/27) currently have \$1.2 million remaining and are on track to be expended by the grant closeout date. FBIC has allocated these funds to include the assessment, cleanup and redevelopment planning, and cleanup of the John Capture Center in Hays, MT; and cleanup of burned homes. Given our current EPA Brownfields funding is fully allocated to other high priority projects, additional investment is needed to help our tribes establish a recreational trail system, kids' fishing pond, youth cultural camp, and 10 remodeled homes to help improve quality of life and community wellness on the Fort Belknap Indian Reservation.

**Attachment A**  
Threshold Criteria Response

**ATTACHMENT A: THRESHOLD CRITERIA RESPONSE****1. Applicant Eligibility**

- a. Fort Belknap Indian Community (FBIC) is composed of two federally recognized Native American tribes, the Aaniiih (Gros Ventre) and the Nakoda (Assiniboine) and is eligible for funding.
- b. The FBIC is exempt from federal and state taxation as federally recognized tribes and sovereign governmental entities. The tribes are not classified as 501(c) (4) organizations and do not lobby the federal government.

**2. Description of Community Involvement:**

Since the inception of our Brownfields Program in 2001, FBIC has prioritized community involvement and stakeholder engagement to guide and inform redevelopment projects. This grant will give us the opportunity to expand our community involvement to include more community discussions and education regarding the importance of environmental assessment, cleanup planning, and redevelopment planning.

For this assessment grant, we will provide information to our community through various means and methods. First, we will provide updates to our tribal council monthly as well as our stakeholder tribal departments and programs, such as the FBIC Planning Department, Tiwahe Program, Immersion School, and Boys and Girls Club. Project updates will be shared regularly on our website and social media pages, and our Environmental Protection Department's quarterly newsletter will include regular progress updates. Following project completion, we will create a fact sheet describing the assessment activities completed and highlighting redevelopment plans to share with the community.

We plan to host four public meetings to share project updates and key findings. The public meetings will be held in a centrally located, ADA-accessible facility in Fort Belknap Agency to best encourage attendance and accommodate any mobility limitations. Sight and hearing concerns will also be accommodated, as needed, through large print publications and sign language interpretations, and materials will be translated into the native White Clay language upon request. The meeting will offer flexible attendance formats including in-person and online options, encouraging higher attendance. Notes will be taken at all meetings, and community comments, questions, and responses will be recorded in meeting minutes. All comments received during the meeting or subsequent 30-day public comment period will be carefully reviewed and considered, and the FBIC Environmental Protection Department will provide written responses to each comment or question. Community input will be incorporated into cleanup planning considerations as well as site reuse plans.

**3. Expenditure of Existing Grant Funds:** The Fort Belknap Indian Community does not have an open EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant or Multipurpose Grant.

**4. Contractors and Named Subrecipients:** Not Applicable - Fort Belknap Indian Community has not identified any contractors or subrecipients to be named in this application. Fort Belknap Indian Community intends to hire a Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP) to manage and oversee the assessments and cleanup planning. Our procurement will be consistent with the competitive procurement provisions of 2 CFR §§200.317 through 200.326.