
FY26 EPA Brownfield Cleanup Executive Summary

Imagine a place where the grit of an industrial legacy meets the promise of resilient renewal. Now travel two hours south of Denver and nestled along the banks of the Arkansas River, between the mountains of the San Juans and famous green Chile farms, sits Pueblo, Colorado, a proud community of approximately 168,000 residents¹. Pueblo County was established in 1861, the same year Colorado became a U.S. territory, placing it among the earliest foundations of organized government in the region. Long before formal boundaries were drawn, the area served as a vital crossroads for Indigenous peoples, traders, and settlers due to its strategic location along the Arkansas River. With the arrival of Hispanic settlers from New Mexico in the mid-1800s and the subsequent influx of miners, merchants, and railroad workers, Pueblo quickly emerged as a hub of agriculture, railroads, coal, and later steel production in southern Colorado.

Since the peak of the industrial boom in the town, Pueblo has navigated economic resilience and strategic opportunities to sustain a flourishing, multi-use community. Nonetheless, due to socioeconomic, environmental, and other related factors, a majority of Pueblo County has been designated as historically disadvantaged as well as an area for navigating persistent poverty. Specifically, the proposed Brownfield cleanup project site, the Government Services Center, which was purchased and owned by Pueblo County Government in 2020, is located Downtown within Census Tract 35.

Sitting as a notable structure in the skyline of Downtown Pueblo. This nine-floor multi-use building on 2.715 acres is expected to catalyze enhancing local economic vitality and foster community networking. Purchased by Pueblo County in 2020, the property's intent is to be transformed into a centralized economic vitality hub for public services, including County Elections and Voter Registration, Community Planning and Development, state agencies, business incubators, and local non-profits. An EPA cleanup grant will remove a significant barrier and springboard the redevelopment of this brownfield property. Which is not only necessary to protect public health but also critical to advancing community revitalization goals, restoring confidence in public spaces, and catalyzing long-term economic and social benefits within Pueblo County.

Description of the Proposed Brownfield Site

The Government Services Center, formerly a multi-commercial office and Wells Fargo Bank, comprises Parcel #525443004. According to the Pueblo County Assessor webpage, the land associated with this parcel is approximately 2.715 acres with one (1) structure present labeled as "Central Business District". The structure was built in 1974 and is ~122,704 square feet with (9) stories and a concrete slab on grade foundation². The building structure is comprised mainly of masonry brick and prefab rock panel exterior with plaster, drywall, brick, and CMU interior finishes. Flooring consists of carpet, ceramic and quarry tile, and vinyl tile, as well as other tenant finishes. Ceiling throughout consists of both textured drywall and dropped ceilings. The structure is currently at 60% occupancy by various professionals and governmental agencies. The 9th floor is occupied

by the HVAC and equipment rooms. The property also has an asphalt parking lot to the north and west. The parking lot includes concrete sidewalks and landscaping.

An [All Phase Environmental Assessment](#) conducted in 2020 identified asbestos-containing materials throughout the building, confirming the presence of environmental conditions that must be addressed to safely return the site to full capacity. Specifically, each floor consists of two restrooms adjacent to the elevators. Said restrooms have tile flooring and walls with a drywall ceiling, which have been identified as asbestos-containing material. Finally, floors and office spaces that still have been identified as containing asbestos-containing material that needs priority cleanup are located on the second and seventh floors

Reuse Strategy and Alignment with Revitalization Plans

To foster an environment of economic excellence, Pueblo's Elected Leaders, County Staff, and community members have created strategic economic vitality investments through local, state, and federal coalitions and assessments, such as, Pueblo's Urban Renewal Authority PURA, whose mission is to "enhance Pueblo neighborhoods through redevelopment projects that create jobs, eliminate blight, improve public infrastructure, and preserve history.³". Additionally, collaborations and partnerships with Pueblo County's Technical Advisory Committee have created strong community impact networks that are engaged throughout all phases of economic development, including land use, building development, and property site reuse strategies. Priority needs assessments identified that the Government Services Center, which was formerly commercial office space and a Wells Fargo bank, is a strategic priority, that has potential for high economic impact and improved quality of life for those who utilize the building, as well as the surrounding residential and commercial neighbors.

An EPA Brownfield Cleanup is not only necessary to protect public health but is essential to restoring confidence in public spaces and enabling long-term investment in Downtown Pueblo. The building's centralized downtown location is critical to its impact. Situated within walking distance of government offices, transit routes, and community gathering spaces, the site offers unparalleled access for residents seeking public services, nonprofit support, and business resources. By transforming this underutilized brownfield into a centralized hub for public services, nonprofit organizations, small business incubation, green space, and emergency preparedness, Pueblo County will restore confidence in public spaces and deliver lasting economic, social, and environmental benefits to the community.

Resources:

1 U.S. Census Bureau. (2020). *Population, Census, April 1, 2020* (for Pueblo city, CO).

<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/pueblacitycolorado/TAW120222>.

2 "Assessor | Pueblo County." *Pueblo County Assessor*, county.pueblo.org/assessor/assessor-home.

3 "Pueblo Urban Renewal Authority " Enhancing Your Community." *Pueblo Urban Renewal Authority*, 5 Jan. 2026, puebloura.org/.