



Memorandum

TO: Mayor and City Council Members

FROM: Crystal Postell, Finance Director

CC: Stevie Cox, City Manager

DATE: August 18, 2024

REF: Designation of Distress Under the Viable Utility Program

Summary:

Trinity City Council to take no action currently for the DEQ Viable Utility Program.

Background:

The City of Trinity has received notice dated July 15, 2024, that we have met or exceeded the threshold for potential designation as a “distress” unit under the Viable Utility Program from the Department of Environmental Quality. Please keep in mind that we have been on the Unit Assistance List (UAL) since 2021, this new designation does not remove us from the UAL, this will be in addition to.

There is an understanding that the new designation *could* allow the City to receive more funding. However, the City does not have to take the new designation under the Viable Utility Program because the Finance Director has had a meeting with the Ms. Susan Kubacki from the Viable Utility Program who has stated that there is NOT a benefit to enrolling in this program this term. Since the City of Trinity are borderline for having a score of 8 which is the minimum score to label you potential designation as a “distress” unit under the Viable Utility Program. If the City scored a nine or more on our Unity Assessment Scorecard, then DEQ would make it mandatory to be enrolled into the Viable Utility Program.

Along with this designation, the state of North Carolina would make it mandatory for all persons involved with the sewer daily operations to attend both training and educational

programs. This would be in addition to the City's current mandatory training and requirements for the UAL. The City has minimal staff and this would be challenging to complete. The City of Trinity should wait until next year to see if we can improve some of the City's scoring on our Unit Assessment Criteria Scorecard.

Recommendation:

Staff recommends that the Trinity City Council take no action in the enrollment of the Viable Utility Program.

Attachment:

Letter from Department of Environmental Quality
Unit Assessment Criteria Scorecard