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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

### 1. Name of Property

historic name Our Lady of Guadalupe Church and Medina Cemetery

other names/site number La Yglesia de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe/5LA.1966

### 2. Location

street & number Colorado Highway 12

n/a not for publication

city or town Medina Plaza

n/a vicinity

state Colorado county Las Animas zip code 81091

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,  
I hereby certify that this X nomination \_\_\_ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

    national     statewide   X   local

Holly K Norton  
Signature of certifying official/Title

Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer 9/30/19  
Date

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government \_\_\_\_\_

### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

X entered in the National Register \_\_\_\_\_ determined eligible for the National Register

\_\_\_ determined not eligible for the National Register \_\_\_\_\_ removed from the National Register

\_\_\_ other (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

Alexis Bernatchy  
Signature of the Keeper

11/15/2019  
Date of Action

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**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- private
- public - Local
- public - State
- public - Federal

**Category of Property**  
(Check only **one** box.)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
2		sites
	1	structures
		objects
3	1	<b>Total</b>

**Name of related multiple property listing**  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

N/A

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions.)

RELIGION: Religious facility

FUNERARY: Cemetery

TRANSPORTATION: Road-related

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions.)

VACANT/NOT IN USE

FUNERARY: Cemetery

TRANSPORTATION: Road-related

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions.)

OTHER: Hispano Adobe Church

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: STONE

walls: ADOBE/STUCCO

\_\_\_\_\_

roof: METAL

other: Chimney: BRICK

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

#### Summary Paragraph

Our Lady of Guadalupe Church and Medina Cemetery are situated on the western edge of the small community of Medina Plaza about eighteen miles west of Trinidad, Colorado, within the Purgatoire River Valley and Las Animas County in rural southeastern Colorado. Velasquez Plaza is approximately 1.5 miles to the east and Cordova Plaza approximately 2 miles to the west. The valley was a focus of early Hispano settlement efforts and Medina Plaza, formerly known as Guadalupe, developed from a *placita* established by northern New Mexico native Agapito Medina and his family ca. 1862.<sup>1</sup> Colorado State Highway 12, a historic cultural route, runs east/west from Trinidad through Medina Plaza to Stonewall where it turns north toward Cuchara. The asphalt-paved, two-lane highway bisects the district and separates the 1.09-acre church grounds to the south from the 0.94-acre Medina Cemetery to the north. The cemetery occupies a square parcel of land separated from the surrounding pastureland by a cedar post and wire fence. The cemetery is believed to contain approximately 200 burials with 100 surviving markers. The earliest documented burial is the grave of Agapito Medina (d. 1890) though it is likely that a large number of earlier unmarked burials exist. The nominated area encompasses four resources, three of which contribute to the significance of the district; a Hispano Adobe church, built ca. 1867 by the Medina family and remodeled at least once before 1936; a privy pit at the southwest corner of the church grounds; and the Medina Cemetery. A segment of Colorado State Highway 12 is considered non-contributing to the district, which overall retains a high level of historic integrity.

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### Narrative Description

#### Setting/Landscape

A semicircular fence of modern barbed wire and wood posts forms the southern edge of the nomination boundary and separates the church grounds from privately-owned agricultural fields to the east, west, and south. The fields were formerly part of the Agapito Medina homestead and include the Martinez & Medina Ditch (*acequia*), pastureland, and the Colorado and Wyoming Railway right-of-way. The Purgatoire River flows parallel to State Highway 12 at the base of the hills that form the southern slope of the Purgatoire River Valley. To the west is an unobstructed view of the Culebra Range, a branch of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains.

East of the district are the adobe homes and outbuildings of Medina Plaza, including the former Medina school, the majority of them on the north side of Highway 12. Most have been remodeled over time and in recent years. Prominent in the plaza, on the south side of the highway, is the newly renovated Primero School and its related buildings.

#### Church, (contributing building), ca. 1867 – ca. 1910-36

The boundary of the church grounds is marked on three sides by a barbed-wire fence and on the fourth side by Colorado State Highway 12. A narrow strip of ground on the east side of the church is said to be an early burial ground, though no evidence of existing burials is visible today. A broken concrete sidewalk and three concrete steps lead to the church's main entrance on the south side. There is a heavy stand of cedar trees on the west side. Other vegetation surrounding the church consists of native plants and grasses.

Our Lady of Guadalupe Church faces south and is L-shaped in plan with a corrugated-metal, front-gable roof (Photo 1). A small, one-story, shed-roof, rectangular rectory, attached to the west side of the chancel, forms the ell and measures 17' x 20' (Photos 4-9). The rectory is structurally different from the main section of the church, suggesting that it may be an early addition constructed prior to ca. 1900-10 when it was first documented.

The roof may have been flat when the church was first constructed and has been reconfigured at least once. A ca. 1900-10 photograph captioned "Our Lady of Guadalupe Chapel/Guadalupe, Colo" (Figure 2), is thought to be the earliest known photograph of the church and documents a more steeply pitched roof over the main portion of the church, a fan window in

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<sup>1</sup> It was not uncommon for early Hispano settlements within the Purgatoire River Valley to be known by a variety of names. The marriage certificate documenting the 1880 marriage of Maria Clara Duran and Julian Medina, Agapito Medina's son, notes Julian Medina as "ex loco Guadalupe" (from Guadalupe) and other family records cite "Guadalupe" as the birthplace or marriage location.

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the gable over the front entrance, a belfry of different design, and a gable roof over the rectory.<sup>2</sup> The roof depicted in the ca. 1900-10 photograph was apparently reconfigured sometime before 1936 when the church was documented with the current roof design, belfry, and gable ends by the Historic American Building Survey (HABS). The impetus for these changes is unknown.

The oldest portion of the church, the rectangular section containing the nave and chancel, measures 61' x 24' and was completed by 1867.<sup>3</sup> The walls are 30" thick and constructed of two wythes of adobe blocks with adobe mud between. Large peeled-log *vigas*, visible from the interior above the nave and chancel ceilings, connect the east and west walls (Photo 17). The walls of the rectory are thinner, at 24" thick, and there is no evidence of *vigas*.

The corrugated-metal roof features tongue-and-groove beadboard soffits at the rake and eaves (Photo 12), a brick chimney near the mid-point of its west slope and a square wood-frame belfry at its south end (Photo 8 and 11). The base of the belfry is clad with corrugated metal. The belfry roof is supported by square wood posts with cross braces at their base and scrollwork corner brackets where they meet the belfry's plain architrave and overhanging cornice. The belfry roof is clad with overlapping flat metal strips and topped by a simple wood cross with a missing cross piece. The Medina family believes the bell was removed sometime in the late 1960s to early 1970s after the church was permanently closed.

All exterior walls are covered in what appears to be smooth cementitious stucco. The metal lath underneath the stucco coating is visible at the bottom of the north wall. Historically, church members re-coated the church with adobe mud about once a year, but the age and exact material of the existing wall coating is unknown. Concrete curbs are present at the base of all walls except the north wall, where the rubble stone foundation is exposed (Photo 10).

**SOUTH (FRONT) FACADE:**

On the church's main (south) façade, wood-plank, double entry doors are mounted in a large central opening (Photos 4 and 13). The jamb is formed by plain wood planks and the doors are deeply inset due to the thickness of the adobe walls. The wood door casing is flush with the surface of the wall surrounding the entrance. The doors are constructed of vertical planks with cross bracing and metal strap hinges (Photos 13 and 18). Although historic, the doors may not be original. The west door is deteriorated and a portion of its planks are missing. The east door features a large keyhole and the outline of the original hardware is visible on the interior side of the door. A curved metal conduit pipe extends from a hole above the entry. Its use is unknown, as neither propane or electricity were ever installed in the building.

The south gable features simple horizontal wood trim boards separating the gable end from the adobe wall below and plain wood frieze boards (Photo 12). In the upper portion of the gable is a rectangular window opening topped by a triangular transom. There are no sashes in these openings, which have wood jambs and trim. The surface of the gable end is covered with overlapping flat metal sheets of various sizes.

**EAST SIDE:**

The east wall has two wood-framed window openings with wood sills on its north end (Photo 3). The exterior portion of the sills are covered with protective sheet metal (Photo 14). The larger opening measures 35" x 30" and is splayed, creating an opening that is 12" wider on the interior and allowing more sunlight to enter the nave (Photo 15). A small portion of the lower wood sash remains intact; the upper sash is missing. The smaller opening to the north looks into the chancel, is not splayed, and has no sash.

**NORTH SIDE:**

The north side of the building consists of the rear wall of the chancel and the rear wall of the rectory addition to the west (Photo 9). A crack in the adobe marks the joint where the church wall meets the rectory addition. The north wall of the church has no window or door openings. The north wall of the rectory addition has a narrow rectangular, wood-framed opening that was reportedly added at a later date and is now blocked from the inside. Details at the north gable end mirror those on the south side, though the rectangular gable window opening is filled with 3"-wide beadboard siding.

<sup>2</sup> The December 9, 1915, issue of the *Denver Catholic Register* states, "There are three Mexican churches in Colorado dedicated to Our Lady of Guadalupe, among them being the oldest and the youngest churches of that nationality in the state—the former at Conejos, the latter at La Junta. A small town in the southern part of the diocese is named Guadalupe, and has a church with Our Lady of Guadalupe as its patron. It is served by the Jesuits from Trinidad." Medina family members report that the community of Medina Plaza was previously known as Guadalupe and that Figure 2 documents the building that is the subject of this nomination.

<sup>3</sup> Daniel Medina, great-grandson of plaza founder Agapito Medina, e-mail communication with Diane Mason, June 24, 2015.

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WEST SIDE:

The rectory addition extends from the north portion of the church's west wall. The addition's north wall is flush with the north wall of the church and is described above. The west wall of the rectory addition has a central wood-framed window opening with a wood sill and metal drip cap at the top of the window frame (Photo 7). The sill is covered with protective sheet metal and a portion of the upper wood sash remains intact. Two 8'-high concrete buttresses support the southwest corner of the rectory (Photo 6). The south wall of the rectory addition has a wood-framed door opening slightly offset from center (Photo 5). The door is no longer intact. A small wood-framed window opening with a wood sill and no sash is located in the attic space above, and to the east of, the door.

The west wall of the church has a wood-framed splayed window opening with a wood sill and a metal drip cap at the top of the window frame (Photo 5). The opening holds no sashes and is aligned with the larger window opening on the east side. Two wood boards have been nailed across the opening.

INTERIOR:

On the interior of the church, the nave is visually separated from the chancel by 8"-square beams running up the east and west walls and across the ceiling (Photo 16). The floor of the chancel is raised 6" above the nave floor and comprised of 2-1/4"-wide tongue-and-groove boards laid over an earlier 5"-wide tongue-and-groove fir floor. The nave floor is finished with 5"-wide tongue-and-groove fir. A rectangular wood dais and markings on the wall indicate the location of the altar table and retablo, respectively, which are no longer extant. Figure 11 documents some of the altar furnishings before they were removed. The small shelf in the northwest corner of the chancel held wine, water, and the white cloth used to wipe the chalice during mass.<sup>4</sup> A wood-framed door opening on the west wall leads from the chancel into the rectory; the door is no longer extant. In the southeast corner of the nave are the remnants of a raised wood platform that once held the church organ. Several steps once led up to the platform, as shown by the paint outline on the south wall (Photo 19).

Two layers of historic ceiling finishes are intact on the interior. The most recent layer is a dropped fiberboard and wood batten ceiling (Photo 16). Water damage has caused large sections of this layer to fall away. The ceiling finish above the dropped ceiling in the nave is *manta de techo* (Photo 17), which consists of dyed cotton muslin nailed to the underside of the *vigas*. Traditionally used to prevent dirt from a flat roof filtering down into the interior, the muslin was first dipped in a mixture of flour and water, then tacked to the ceiling while still wet where it then dried and shrank to a tight fit. At this church, bluing was added to the dipping mixture, dyeing the fabric to a bright blue resembling the color of the sky.<sup>5</sup> Above the *manta de techo*, *vigas* are visible (Photo 17). Above the *vigas*, in what is now the attic, is a layer of pine plank flooring.

The interior walls are covered in what is likely an adobe mud and lime coating. The upper two-thirds of the nave walls and the full height of the chancel walls are finished with a pale blue calcimine wash (Photo 16). Remnants of historic baseboards and beadboard wainscoting remain intact throughout the church.

*Alterations:* The presence of *vigas* suggests that the church may have had a flat roof when first constructed. In *Some Family Recollections*, J.F. Cordova, notes that the nearby Our Lady of Mount Carmel Chapel (5LA.5923), built ca. 1871-78 at Cordova Plaza, "originally was a flat-roofed structure as was then customary."<sup>6</sup> According to Cordova, a gable roof replaced the flat roof at Our Lady of Mount Carmel ca. 1910-12. If the original roof at Our Lady of Guadalupe Church was flat, it was likewise replaced by the more practical steeply-pitched gable roof and belfry documented ca. 1900-10 in Figure 2.<sup>7</sup> The one-story, gable-roof rectory on the church's west side, also documented in Figure 2, is structurally different from the main body of the church and was likely added shortly after the church was constructed. These changes, if not part of the original construction, brought the church's design in line with the other Hispano adobe churches constructed along the Purgatoire River during the latter half of the nineteenth century (Figures 1, 2, 13, and 16).

Between ca. 1900-10 and 1936, when the church was photographed by HABS, the gable roof over the main portion of the church was apparently replaced with a less steeply pitched gable roof, a new belfry installed, the gable ends remodeled,

<sup>4</sup> Daniel Medina, email communication with Diane Mason, June 24, 2015.

<sup>5</sup> Bainbridge Bunting, *Taos Adobes, Spanish Colonial and Territorial Architecture of the Taos Valley* (Santa Fe: Fort Burgwin Research Center, Museum of New Mexico Press, 1964), 7-16.

<sup>6</sup> J. F. Cordova, "The Church the Core of the Village," in *Some Family Recollections* (n.p., n.d.)

<sup>7</sup> Robert Adams, *The Architecture and Art of Early Hispanic Colorado* (Niwot, Colorado: University Press of Colorado, 1974), 39-40. Adams notes that flat-roofed buildings became increasingly rare because they required constant effort to maintain and often leaked, noting that the flat roof on the ca. 1880 Los Sauces Church in Conejos County was reconfigured after only twelve years.

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and a shed roof installed over the rectory (compare Figures 2 and 4). Why these changes were made remains unknown to date.<sup>8</sup>

The buttresses located on the building's west side were presumably added during the period of significance, ca. 1867-1966, to address structural issues commonly seen in adobe buildings. Similar buttresses are found on other ca. 1870s Hispano Adobe churches in the Purgatoire Valley (Figure 13). A historic photo from 1936 documents vertical wood planks covering the south and north walls at the gable peaks (Figure 4). This material was covered with smooth overlapping metal sheathing at an unknown date, presumably outside the period of significance (Photo 12). Corrugated metal has been applied to the base of belfry sometime between 1936 and 1974, perhaps within the period of significance (Figure 6). The window sashes are no longer intact, though a few remnants remain. The exterior door on the one-story rectory portion of the church is missing, as is the interior door leading from the chancel into the rectory. A fiberboard and batten ceiling was installed over the *manta de techo* ceiling cloth at some point during the period of significance, likely after the church ownership reverted back to the Medina family from the Penitente Brotherhood in 1931 (Photo 16). The altar, retablo, pews, and chancel railing have all been removed; however, the interior spatial arrangement remains intact and the location of the chancel, altar, and *retablo* remain easily identifiable (Photo 16).

**Medina Cemetery (contributing site), ca. 1870s**

On the north side of Colorado Highway 12, opposite the church, is the Medina Cemetery (Photo 20). The site is accessed from Colorado Highway 12 via a non-historic cattle gate and a rough two-track dirt road located west of the cemetery and outside the nomination boundary. As photographer and landscape historian Robert Adams notes in *The Architecture and Art of Early Hispanic Colorado*, burial grounds like the Medina Cemetery convey "both an acceptance of nature and a faith that extends beyond it. The initial impression most [Colorado Hispano] cemeteries give is of stony dryness. Sage, cactus, rabbit bush, and yucca are likely to be the only green. Burials are attended with flowers and decorations, but there is no attempt made permanently to change the landscape into an eastern garden."<sup>9</sup>

The 0.94-acre cemetery is square in shape and surrounded by historic fencing of cedar posts and wire, separating it from the surrounding land, which is covered by low-scale native grasses and plants with a few scattered small- to medium-size shrubs. The land within the cemetery boundary is covered with the same type of natural vegetation.

Some graves are loosely organized into family groupings with individual burials scattered throughout the cemetery. The monuments are roughly arranged in incomplete east-west rows and most are set facing south toward the church, the Purgatoire River, and the Culebra Range beyond. A few plots are surrounded by historic wire fencing or concrete curbing and at least one plot is surrounded by a decorative wood fence, or *cerquita*, now partially collapsed. Many graves are decorated with brightly colored plastic flowers. Iconography and statuary includes symbols commonly associated with the Catholic faith, including the Sacred Heart and Our Lady of Guadalupe.

As many as 100 markers within the cemetery are illegible, making it difficult to pinpoint when the first burial took place. The earliest known burial is 1890 and the earliest legible headstone displays a death date of 1901, though it is highly likely that burials took place on this site much earlier. A survey conducted by the Trinidad Historical Society in 1977 documents that about 200 burials took place throughout the twentieth century, and the cemetery remains active today. The vast majority of the legible headstones display Hispano surnames, including several associated with the area's earliest settlers such as Cordova, Medina, Velasquez, and Vigil.

Monuments represent a variety of eras, materials, designs, styles, and sizes. Most are small to medium in size and relatively simple in design. The majority of historic headstones are hand-carved or incised natural stone, with a few made of metal (Photos 22 and 25). Several graves are marked with simple tin crosses with nameplates that may have replaced deteriorated wood markers (Photo 1). A number of monuments appear to be homemade and some have unique designs. A few of the more elaborate headstones display a small inset oval photograph of the deceased. About ten military headstones mark the graves of veterans, including that of Medina Plaza founder Agapito Medina (Photo 23). The dates on about ten legible stones can possibly be attributed to the Influenza Pandemic of 1918-19.

*Alterations:* Principal changes to the resource are the result of age and exposure to the elements, including fallen, broken, or missing grave markers and deteriorated grave fencing. Wood crosses were the preferred means of marking Hispano

<sup>8</sup> There is no physical evidence that a fire prompted the reconfiguration of the roofs and the Medina family has no recollection of a natural disaster or other event that damaged the church during the early 1900s.

<sup>9</sup> Adams, 47-8.

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graves in northern New Mexico, and Robert Adams documented several examples in Colorado ca. 1974.<sup>10</sup> No wood crosses appear to survive at the Medina Cemetery; however, several graves are marked with simple tin nameplates with crosses, markers that Adams suggests were used to replace deteriorated wood markers.<sup>11</sup> The cemetery remains active; approximately fifteen to twenty non-historic burials (burials that took place less than fifty years ago) have taken place at the cemetery, including five descendants of Agapito and Vitalia Medina, and are interspersed within the historic burials.

**Privy Pit (contributing site), ca. 1867**

The privy building that once stood at the southwest corner of the church grounds was removed after the church closed ca. 1959. It had one seat and was covered with rough plank siding. The privy pit remains undisturbed and may contain archaeological deposits; however, additional fieldwork and testing is needed to evaluate the significance of any potential archaeological deposits in this area.

**Colorado State Highway 12, non-contributing structure**

Colorado State Highway 12 is a two-lane, asphalt-paved roadway extending east/west from Trinidad through Medina Plaza to Stonewall where it turns north toward Cuchara. Evolving from a Native American trail to a wagon and stage road to a paved roadway, Colorado State Highway 12 links the historic Hispano plaza communities between Trinidad and Stonewall and exemplifies the "cultural state highway" property type identified in the Multiple Property Documentation Form, *Colorado State Roads and Highways*.<sup>12</sup> *Colorado State Roads and Highways* defines cultural state roads and highways as follows:

Cultural routes are legacies handed down from the first people to venture through a mountain pass or trek over the prairie. Cultural routes evolved through necessity or tradition. While these roads may have a documented date of origin, they developed without the intensive engineering and design practices associated with aesthetic and engineered routes. These may be roads that evolved from Native American trails, trade routes, or simply from convenient connections between settlements.<sup>13</sup>

The roadway bisects the district and passes approximately 15' from the north wall of the church and approximately 100' from the cemetery's southern fence line. The roadway is narrow, with two 11'-wide asphalt-paved lanes and 1'-wide asphalt-paved shoulders. The land directly north of the road slopes gently away from the road surface for a few feet before climbing sharply, creating a natural drainage ditch. The area is covered with native grasses. The land directly south of the road is comparatively flat with no readily apparent drainage features. This area is also covered with native grasses.

*Alterations:* State Highway 12 began as a trail along the Purgatoire River used by Native Americans to travel between the grasslands east of present-day Trinidad and the Sangre de Cristo Mountains, a subrange of the Rocky Mountains. After 1874, the trail evolved into a wagon and stage road linking the early Hispano settlements established along the river during the 1860s and early 1870s. Historic USGS topographic maps indicate that the route has changed very little since the early 1890s (Figure 14). Improved by volunteers in 1911, presumably to accommodate automobile traffic, it became known as the Stonewall Road. Under the Works Progress Administration (WPA), over 5,000 miles of Colorado roads were improved in the 1930s, including the reconstruction and oil-surfacing of 38 miles of State Highway 12 in 1936.<sup>14</sup> The road surface changed from gravel to paved asphalt at some point afterward; the exact date is unknown, but this change likely occurred within the district's period of significance. The relatively narrow lane and shoulder widths suggest that the road has not been substantially widened since it was first paved.

**Integrity**

Our Lady of Guadalupe Church and Medina Cemetery retains sufficient integrity to convey its association with local Hispano cultural traditions and practices and its significance as a good example of a Hispano Adobe church constructed along Colorado's Purgatoire River between Trinidad and Stonewall.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 101, 149, 150, 170, 214.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 47.

<sup>12</sup> The Multiple Property Documentation Form, *Colorado State Roads and Highways*, was prepared in 2003 and accepted for Colorado State Register of Historic Properties use that year. The MPDF has not been submitted to the National Park Service to date.

<sup>13</sup> Robert Autobee and Deborah Dobson-Brown, Associated Cultural Resource Experts, *Colorado State Roads and Highways* Multiple Property Documentation Form, E-2. <https://www.historycolorado.org/colorado-state-roads-and-highways>.

<sup>14</sup> Associated Cultural Resource Experts, *Highways to the Sky: A Context and History of Colorado's Highway System*. Littleton, CO, April 24, 2002, 6-3.

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*Location:* Our Lady of Guadalupe Church and Medina Cemetery have not been moved, and State Highway 12 has not been substantially realigned. Therefore, these resources possess excellent integrity of location.

*Setting:* The rural landscape surrounding the Our Lady of Guadalupe Church and Medina Cemetery has changed little over the years. The church and cemetery remain surrounded by agricultural fields that allow unobstructed views of the hills and mountains to the north, south and west. The modern Primero Elementary School, located approximately 0.25 miles to the east across open fields, is sufficiently distant from the church as to not detract from the historic setting. The small historic homes that dot the landscape along State Highway 12 between the church and the school, though modified over time, provide a sense of the area's early development pattern and do not significantly diminish this aspect of integrity. The presence of the church's historically associated cemetery contributes to the integrity of setting, which remains exceptionally high.

*Design:* The historic roof alterations made between ca. 1900 and 1936 carried forward the important features of Our Lady of Guadalupe Church's earlier design in a modified manner consistent with the Hispano Adobe church type. The church continues to display the key design characteristics of Hispano Adobe churches within the Purgatoire Valley: an ell-shaped plan, front-gable roof with gable window and simple wood belfry, and an interior divided into nave and chancel spaces. Integrity of design is somewhat diminished by the loss of the window sashes, retablo, altar, and altar railing; however other features, such as the splayed window openings, speak to Hispano building traditions and support the church's overall good integrity of design. The Medina Cemetery retains excellent integrity of design with few modern burials added and little if no changes made to the perimeter fencing, grave markers and fencing, and traditional natural landscape. Information regarding the historic design features of State Highway 12 is limited; however, its narrow shoulders suggest that the road has not been substantially widened since it was improved in the 1930s and the roadway appears to retain good integrity of design.

*Materials:* A limited amount of historic material has been lost or covered by modern material due to exposure to the elements and deterioration; however, the integrity of materials most closely tied to the building's significance, such as its thick adobe walls, *vigas*, interior wall and floor finishes, and *manta de techo* ceiling cloth is sufficient to convey a clear understanding of the traditional materials used to build and maintain the church during its period of active use. Within the cemetery, integrity of materials is excellent with a variety of traditional grave marker and fencing materials represented. The paving of State Highway 12 with asphalt at an unknown date has diminished its integrity of materials to some degree. However, as the authors of the *Colorado State Roads and Highways* MPDF note, highways are "exceptionally vulnerable to alteration over time because of maintenance and modernization. A highway cannot be expected to retain all of its original materials and design elements for more than a few years after initial construction."<sup>15</sup> This is especially true of cultural state roads and highways, which have typically undergone a variety of changes and modifications over time.<sup>16</sup>

*Workmanship:* The church's integrity of workmanship is good; the craftsmanship and building techniques employed by the Medina family and Hispano community members who built and maintained the church over time are readily visible in its adobe walls, *vigas*, belfry details, and interior finishes. The cemetery retains excellent integrity of workmanship, which is evident in the craftsmanship of the grave markers and surviving *cerquitas*.

*Feeling:* The church's good integrity of design, materials and workmanship, combine with its excellent integrity of setting, to evoke a strong sense of Hispano church building traditions and life in the small plaza communities along the Purgatoire River from early settlement through the 1960s. This feeling is significantly bolstered by the good integrity and rural character of the Medina Cemetery and State Highway 12.

*Association:* Our Lady of Guadalupe Church and Medina Cemetery, retains excellent integrity of association and continues to clearly read as a historic adobe church and cemetery that served the Hispano community surrounding one of the Purgatoire Valley's earliest *plaza* settlements. State Highway 12 continues to convey its historic role in connecting the Hispano *plaza* communities and mission churches within the Purgatoire River Valley with one another and the outside world.

<sup>15</sup> Autabee and Dobson-Brown, F-1.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, E-2.



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**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes. (During its period of significance).
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Ethnic Heritage: Hispano

Architecture

**Period of Significance**

ca. 1867 – 1966

**Significant Dates**

1902-29

1959

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

Hispano

**Architect/Builder**

unknown

**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, areas of significance, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

Our Lady of Guadalupe Church and Medina Cemetery in Medina Plaza, Colorado, is locally significant under Criterion A in the area of Ethnic Heritage: Hispano for its association with the cultural traditions and practices of early Hispano settlers in the Purgatoire Valley of southeastern Colorado during the second half of the nineteenth century; its association with the activities of the Penitente Brotherhood, *El Sociedad de Nuestro Padre Jesus de Nazareno*, from 1902 to 1929; and its subsequent Hispano cultural usage until 1959. Our Lady of Guadalupe Church is also locally significant under Criterion C

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in the area of Architecture as a relatively rare example of Hispano Adobe church architecture as constructed in the Purgatoire River Valley. The district retains a high level of integrity.

The period of significance for Ethnic Heritage extends from ca. 1867, when the church was first constructed, to 1966 when the last documented historic Hispano burial took place at the Medina Cemetery. The period of significance for Architecture is ca. 1867, the date of the church's construction, through 1936, the date by which all potential historic additions and roof reconfigurations are known to have been completed.

Although currently privately-owned and vacant, Our Lady of Guadalupe Church was owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes during its period of significance and per National Register Bulletin 15, Criteria Consideration A applies.<sup>17</sup> The property is being nominated for its architectural, historical and ethnic heritage significance and therefore meets the burden of Criteria Consideration A. The Medina Cemetery is nominated along with its associated church; therefore, Criteria Consideration D is not applicable.

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**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

**Criterion A: Ethnic Heritage: Hispano**

Our Lady of Guadalupe Church and Medina Cemetery in Medina Plaza, Colorado, is significant under Criterion A in the area of Ethnic Heritage: Hispano for its historical association with Hispano cultural traditions and practices in the Purgatoire River Valley for more than 100 years. Hispano settlers who arrived from New Mexico in the 1860s and '70s brought social and cultural traditions that had changed very little from the time their ancestors arrived from Spain. In *A Tapestry of Kinship*, historian José Antonio Esquibel and scholar Charles M. Carrillo described the impact of religion on the lives of Hispano community members in New Mexico: "Daily living was regulated by a calendar of feasts that governed the relations between the living and the dead, blending work, religion, worship, devotion, work-days, and feast-days into a routine, predictable, and reassuring whole."<sup>18</sup> According to Daniel Medina, descendent of Agapito Medina and Vitalia Trujillo:

When I think of growing up in Medina Plaza, I know that the Catholic Church played an important role in my formative years. Our Lady of Guadalupe, was not only a place of worship. It was a community meeting place for family and neighbors to share common interests. It was a neutral space where neighbors could come together no matter what problems or disputes they had. We united in happy times such as baptisms, holy communions, confirmations and weddings. We shared personal tragedies and funerals. We celebrated holidays with special masses and marched around the church in procession for a Novena, reciting a rosary, or singing. Every month families took turns preparing the church for mass and cleaning up afterward. People fed the priest at their homes where he was treated as part of their family. These are some of the personal experiences I remember and I now realize that the church was a unifying experience for all of us.<sup>19</sup>

Our Lady of Guadalupe Church met the religious needs of the Medina family and their neighbors, and provided a central social and cultural gathering place in an isolated area. The church was the focus of Hispano community life and the location of many important community events including baptisms, marriages, funerals, celebrations, and feasts. Sermons at the church were typically given in Spanish, but by the late 1940s English was more commonly used. Parishioners, along with friends and relatives from other *plazas*, came to the church to participate in special services and traditional processions, including the annual procession honoring the community's patron saint, Our Lady of Guadalupe. The church was the center of religious life in Medina Plaza, and these sacred events strengthened the bonds between community members.

Between 1902 and 1929, the church building served as the *morada*, or meeting hall, for *los hermanos* of the *Sociedad de Nuestro Padre Jesus Nazareno*, also known as the Penitente Brotherhood. A lay religious society, the Penitente

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<sup>17</sup> National Park Service, Department of the Interior, *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*, National Register Bulletin 15, [https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalregister/upload/NRB-15\\_web508.pdf](https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalregister/upload/NRB-15_web508.pdf), 26.

<sup>18</sup> Jose Antonio Esquibel and Charles M. Carrillo, *A Tapestry of Kinship: The Web of Influence among Escultores and Carpinteros in the Parish of Santa Fe, 1790-1860* (Los Ranchos de Albuquerque: LPD Press), 26.

<sup>19</sup> Daniel Medina, email communication with Diane Mason, August 2019.

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Brotherhood developed in New Mexico to fill the gap left when Mexico expelled Spanish priests in the early 1800s. Often misunderstood or suppressed early on, chapters consisted primarily of Hispanic males who participated in rituals and observances which included prayer, processions, and penitential devotions, including Holy Week re-enactments of the Passion. While restricted from the practicing membership, women provided essential supporting functions. Local chapters kept special meeting houses, or *moradas*, to store ceremonial artifacts and serve as chapels.<sup>20</sup>

The *Context Study of the Hispanic Cultural Landscape of the Purgatoire/Apishapa*, describes the role of the Penitente Brotherhood in the social and cultural life of the Hispano communities along the Purgatoire River:

The fraternity initially fulfilled social and religious functions left unattended by the absence of organized religious institutions. The brotherhood later existed side-by-side with established parishes by taking care of social functions. In addition to religious rituals, chapters provided material assistance to the survivors of the deceased, organized wakes, funerals, and burials, attended the sick, policed misconduct, and marshaled political support. The order increased in influence through the late nineteenth century as numerous local chapters spread through New Mexico and southern Colorado.<sup>21</sup>

The Catholic churches, chapels, and *moradas* throughout the Purgatoire Valley were typically associated with a burial ground that served the needs of the plaza communities. Some, like the Medina Cemetery associated with Our Lady of Guadalupe Church and the Tijeras Cemetery (5LA.2185) associated with Holy Child Chapel (5LA.1970), are situated on land nearby its church, while others such as the Cordova Plaza Cemetery (5LA.11755) are located farther away. The Medina Cemetery exhibits features associated with Hispano cemeteries identified by Robert Adams in *The Architecture and Art of Early Hispanic Colorado*, including natural field stones with a name or a cross scratched into the surface (Photo 22), at least one surviving *cerquita*, wood picket grave fencing (Figure 9, Photo 24), concrete markers, and at least one iron marker, common in New Mexico but rare in Colorado (Figure 8, Photo 25). Respected cultural geographer Terry G. Jordan examined Hispano burial traditions in *Texas Graveyards, A Cultural Legacy*, noting the traditional disinterest in formal spatial arrangement and formal landscaping within Hispano cemeteries, both clearly evident at Medina Cemetery.

As historic cultural route, State Highway 12 played an important role in connecting the *plazas* along the river socially and economically with one another and the outside world. From the arrival of the first Hispano settler in the 1860s to today, the route dictated the location of early settlements, allowed area farmers and ranchers to bring their goods to market and connected individuals from the surrounding area to the religious and social heart of the local Hispano communities, the mission churches that were built along its path.

### Criterion C: Architecture

During early Hispano settlement of the Purgatoire River Valley in the 1860s and 70s, a number of adobe churches were built to serve the small *plazas* established along the river between Trinidad and Stonewall. A 1995 map published in *Nuestras Raíces*, the Journal of the Genealogical Society of Hispanic America, documents the historic churches of the Purgatoire Valley (Figure 1). Of the churches noted on the map, at least five are known to be constructed of adobe and associated with early Hispano *plazas* on the banks of the Purgatoire River: Holy Child (*Santo Niño de Atocha*) Chapel (5LA.1970) at Tijeras Plaza (ca. 1876), Our Lady of Mount Carmel Chapel (5LA.5923) at Cordova Plaza (ca. 1871-78), Our Lord of Esquipula Church (5LA.5929) at La Junta Plaza (now Weston) (ca. 1893), San Isidro Church (5LA.1105) at Vigil Plaza (ca. 1870), and Our Lady of Guadalupe Church at Medina Plaza (ca. 1867).<sup>22</sup> These churches share common characteristics and constitute a distinct and discernable type, the Hispano Adobe church as constructed in the Purgatoire River Valley during its early settlement (Figure 13).<sup>23</sup>

Hispano Adobe churches are small, one-and-one-half story, rectangular-plan, adobe buildings, constructed using traditional Hispano building materials and techniques with simple Victorian-era decorative details sometimes included at

<sup>20</sup> Richard Carillo et al., *Context Study of the Hispanic Cultural Landscape of the Purgatoire/Apishapa, Las Animas County, Colorado: An Interdisciplinary Approach to the History, Architecture, Oral History and Historical Archaeology*. Prepared for the Trinidad Historical Society, 2003, 63; Vicki Rottman, survey form for Tijeras Cemetery (5LA.2185), 1980.

<sup>21</sup> Carillo et al., 63.

<sup>22</sup> Vigil, 9-15; St. Ignatius Catholic Church in Segundo (Los Barros), reportedly built in 1885, is likely constructed of adobe as well but has not been surveyed to date and has been clad with siding and extensively remodeled over time (Figure 13).

<sup>23</sup> Carillo et al., 184-6.

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the belfry and window openings. These churches typically feature a front-gable corrugated metal roof with open wood-frame belfry, a large double-door entry on the front façade, and a small window set near the gable peaks on the front and rear walls. All recorded examples include a small one-story room attached to the side of the church, adjacent to the chancel, and at times used by the priest assigned to the area as a rectory. Some examples, such as Mount Carmel Church and San Isidoro, feature a rounded or faceted chancel. The interior spatial arrangement is simple; the nave and chancel occupy the main body of the church with the smaller secondary space accessible from the chancel. The chancel is typically separated from the nave by a low railing and slightly raised above the main floor. Rows of pews occupy the nave, while the altar is situated within the chancel, typically in front of a *retablo*, a traditional Hispano altarpiece (Figures 11 and 16). The Holy Child Chapel at Tijeras Plaza and Our Lady of Guadalupe Church both feature associated cemeteries located close to the church.

A historic photographic collage documents the mission churches associated with Holy Trinity Church in Trinidad ca. 1900-10 (Figure 1). All share the common characteristics of the Hispano Adobe church type. A historic photograph included in the collage captioned as “Our Lady of Guadalupe Chapel/Guadalupe, Colo” depicts the Our Lady of Guadalupe Church in Medina Plaza (formerly known as Guadalupe) prior to the remodeling of its roof, gable ends, and belfry (Figure 2). The remodeling took place prior to 1936, when the church was documented as part of the Historic American Building Survey (HABS), and carried forward the features associated with the Hispano Adobe church type (Figure 4).

San Isidro at Vigil Plaza remains an active church associated with Holy Trinity Church in Trinidad and has been significantly enlarged over time. Its current appearance is markedly different from when it was documented by HABS in 1936. Our Lord of Esquipula in Weston was also expanded over time and had wood siding, both historic and modern, installed. Other recent changes were made to adapt the building for use as a private residence. The front façade of Mount Carmel Chapel in Cordova Plaza (5LA.5923) is clad with historic wood siding, reportedly added ca. 1930. Like Our Lady of Guadalupe Church, Mount Carmel Chapel features *vigas* and is said to have had a flat roof when first constructed.<sup>24</sup> The presence of *vigas* suggests that some of the earliest Hispano Adobe churches may have had flat roofs when first built. However, it was common practice in the Purgatoire Valley to replace flat roofs on adobe buildings with gable roofs early in the life of the building, as gable roofs were more suited to the climate in southeastern Colorado.<sup>25</sup>

Mount Carmel Chapel in Cordova Plaza, Holy Child Chapel at Tijeras Plaza, and Our Lady of Guadalupe Church at Medina Plaza retain the highest level of integrity among the known examples of Hispano Adobe churches along the Purgatoire River between Trinidad and Stonewall. All clearly convey the characteristics of Hispano Adobe churches constructed ca. 1870, with a few historic modifications made in response to the impacts of age and climate on adobe buildings, such as the addition of wood siding and/or adobe buttressing. At Our Lady of Guadalupe Church, the historic alterations to the roof represented a more extensive change, but these later alterations maintained the distinctive design features typical of early Hispano Adobe churches.

Our Lady of Guadalupe Church is the first of these churches to be nominated for listing in the National Register of Historic Places and clearly exhibits the character-defining features of the Hispano Adobe church type. Built ca. 1867, it is a small, one-and-one-half story, rectangular-plan, front-gable, adobe church building with a small one-story rectory attached to the side of the church, adjacent to the chancel; a corrugated metal roof and open wood belfry; a large double-door entry on the front façade; and small windows set in the gables at the front and rear of the building. The interior spatial arrangement remains intact, though the altar, *retablo*, pews, and chancel railing have been removed. Its modest design and vernacular details speaks to its history as a chapel built and maintained by the Medina family using local materials and traditional Hispano building techniques. The building is particularly notable for the thickness of its adobe walls, splayed window openings, remnants of *manta de techo* ceiling cloth, *vigas*, and its associated historic cemetery.

<sup>24</sup> Adams, 93.

<sup>25</sup> Adams, 39-40.

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**Developmental history/additional historic context information** (if appropriate)

**Early Settlement in the Upper Purgatoire River Valley**

The three forks of the Purgatoire River—South, Middle, and North—originate in the Culebra Range of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains in southeast Colorado, converging near Weston. The river flows east to Trinidad before joining the Arkansas River near Las Animas, Colorado, 100 miles to the northeast.

As early as 14,000 to 11,500 years ago, the abundant water and game in the Upper Purgatoire River Valley attracted Paleo-Indian and later hunter-gatherers to the area. The last of these groups, the Apishapa, were replaced by the Ute in the 1400s. Spanish explorers arrived from the south during the late 1500s and 1600s. One expedition found what was then thought to be the remains of Juan Hermana and his men along the river. Hermana was the leader of a doomed expedition that had vanished after Hermana reportedly murdered his fellow explorer Francisco Bonilla. After the discovery, the river was afterward referred to as *El Rio de Las Animas Perdidas en Purgatorio*, “the River of the Souls Lost in Purgatory.”

By the early 1700s, Apache and Comanche had moved into the area, joining the Ute. Conflicts among the tribes led to an alliance between the Ute and Comanche, who largely drove the Apache from the region before falling into conflict themselves. The Spanish failed to establish permanent settlements in the area and struggled to exert control, at times coming into conflict with the indigenous tribes. Territorial conflicts between Spain and the United States intensified after the French sold the Louisiana Territory to the United States in 1803. In an effort to ease tensions, the Adams-Onis Treaty of 1819 established the Arkansas River as the border between Spain and the United States.

In 1821, Mexico gained independence from Spain. The Santa Fe Trail, connecting Missouri in the United States and Santa Fe in Nuevo Mexico, became a major trade route, spurring early settlement efforts in the region. In 1832, the Mexican government began issuing land grants along the trail, but conflicts with native peoples and white Texans discouraged many Mexicans from moving north.

In 1846, the U.S. Army invaded northern Mexico in response to conflicts resulting from the U.S. annexation of Texas in 1845. The ensuing war ended in 1848 with the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, which ceded Mexico's northern territories to the United States. Trapper Richens Wootton explored the Purgatoire Valley in 1858, and soon after several Hispano families attempted to found permanent settlements in the Upper Purgatoire River Valley. In 1859, Alejandro Gutierrez established a cattle ranch at Stonewall. Possibly because of the isolation and danger, he left the area and moved farther east, later returning around 1880. New Mexican sheep rancher Gabriel Gutierrez and his nephew, Juan N. Gutierrez, Jr., also arrived in 1859 and constructed a cabin on the south bank of the Purgatoire River in what is today downtown Trinidad.<sup>26</sup> Juan Gutierrez, Jr.'s father, Juan Gutierrez, Sr., and his brother Antonio, soon followed, establishing a ranch several miles west of Trinidad, which they named El Alcor de la Zorro (Hill of the Fox). In Long's Canyon, the settlement of El Rito (5LA.1107) was established around 1860-61.<sup>27</sup>

In 1860, entrepreneur Don Felipe de Jesus Baca (1829–74) traveled through the Purgatoire Valley on his way to Denver. On his way home to northern New Mexico, he camped in the valley again and was struck by its potential for agriculture and grazing. He went back in the fall with plans to establish a farm. His efforts proved successful and he returned home with melons and grain harvested from his claim. In March 1862, Baca led twelve New Mexican families to the Trinidad region in Las Animas County, Colorado. They were known as the “Guadalupe Colony.” These families founded what would become some of the earliest permanent settlements in Las Animas County.<sup>28</sup>

Between 1862 and the mid-1870s, early Hispano settlers in Upper Purgatoire Valley and surrounding canyons established a number of *placitas*, small family-based settlements, many along the river between Trinidad and Stonewall. Construction of an *acequia* (a hand-dug irrigation ditch) typically began soon after a family arrived. The settlers were primarily Americans of Spanish-Mexican descent who traveled north from New Mexico seeking new opportunities.

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<sup>26</sup> Carillo et al., 60.

<sup>27</sup> Towns of Las Animas County Committee, Trinidad Historical Society, *Stonewall Valley: Gateway to the Culebras, El Valle Bonito, El Valle de San Juan* (Trinidad, Colorado: Cedar St. Printing, 2018); Frank Hall, *History of the State of Colorado* (Chicago: The Blakely Printing Company, 1895), 192.

<sup>28</sup> Luis Baca, “The Guadalupe Colony of Trinidad,” *The Colorado Magazine*, 21, No. 1, January 1944; Carillo et al, 60.

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As described in *La Cultura Constante de San Luis*, an examination of the Hispano history and culture in Colorado's San Luis Valley, "Settlers joined their homes close together into a compact communal rectangle or *placita*, for protection from Indian depredations. This closeness was not only for defense; it was also characteristic of the interdependence of the people, reinforced by isolation: the need to work together for survival was crucial."<sup>29</sup> This applies to the settlements in the Purgatoire Valley as well.

*Placitas* were typically comprised of mostly flat-roofed adobe buildings connected in an L-shape. Other buildings and structures, such as barns and corrals, were sometimes added to create an enclosed compound.<sup>30</sup> Typically, each *placita* was the home of an extended family; as the family grew, additional rooms were added. Larger settlements became known as *plazas* and were often home to several different families. Many *placitas* and *plazas* included a chapel named in honor of a patron saint, and some had an associated *penitente morada*.

Luis Baca, son of Don Felipe Baca, identified these early *plazas* as: Suaso Plaza, Tijeras Plaza, Los Baros (now Segundo), Sarcillo Plaza, Velasquez Plaza, La Junta Plaza (now Weston), Cordova Plaza, Zamora Plaza, Vigil Plaza, Lucero Plaza, Torres Plaza, Martinez Plaza, Apodaca Plaza, San Antonio Plaza (now Aguilar), Trinchera Plaza, San Francisco Plaza (now Barela), San Lorenzo Plaza (now Gray Creek), Chilili, and Medina Plaza.

The *plazas* were most prosperous during the 1870s and 1880s, when agricultural production in the Purgatoire River Valley was at its height. The advent of the coal mining industry in the region in 1900 marked the gradual decline of these communities.

### Agapito Medina and the Founding of Medina Plaza

Agapito Medina was born in northern Mexico on April 15, 1832, in Nuevo Mexico. By 1850, he was living with his parents and siblings on the family farm in Taos County, New Mexico, which was now part of the United States. In 1855, he married Maria Vitalia Trujillo at St. Gertrudes Church in Mora, New Mexico. The couple was living in San Antonio, New Mexico, with their three young children when Medina joined the Mora County Militia as a sergeant on November 14, 1861, serving for three months during the Civil War. He was mustered out on February 14, 1862.

According to descendants of Agapito Medina and Vitalia Trujillo, members of the Medina family made their way to Las Animas County ca. 1862, establishing a homestead about 15 miles west of Trinidad.<sup>31</sup> The 1870 U.S. Census documents the Medinas in the Purgatoire River Valley, along with several other Hispano families that had settled in the immediate vicinity. The Medina's *placita* became known by several names, including "Guadalupe," "Los Medinas," and later "Medina Plaza."

The Medina home was a one-story, rectangular-plan, flat-roof adobe home, in keeping with traditional Hispano building practices of the period.<sup>32</sup> An *acequia*, the Martinez and Medina Ditch (5LA.9878), was dug to irrigate the surrounding land. The *acequia*, which is still in operation today, was registered and awarded District Priority No. 13 and Las Animas River Priority No. 13 with a priority date of January 1, 1864, suggesting that the *acequia* was dug soon after the family's arrival.<sup>33</sup> In time, fruit orchards and gardens were planted on the land to the north of the home. When animals were butchered, the work and meat were shared with neighbors. Medicinal herbs were collected for treatment of different illnesses. It is possible that the Medinas (like Felipe Baca and other local farmers) traveled by wagon to sell a portion of

<sup>29</sup> Marianne Stoller, Maclovio Martinez, and Randal Teeuwen, eds., *La Cultura Constante de San Luis* (San Luis Museum and Cultural Center, 1985).

<sup>30</sup> Adams, 36-7.

<sup>31</sup> Daniel Medina, phone conversation with Diane Mason, August 9, 2019. It is possible that the Medina family was one of the twelve families that accompanied Felipe Baca to Colorado in 1862; however, no direct evidence of this has been found to date. In "The Guadalupita Colony of Trinidad," *The Colorado Magazine*, 21, No. 1, January 1944, Luis Baca states that the Medina family arrived in 1868 and census records indicate that the couple's son, Jose Guadalupe Medina, was born in New Mexico sometime between 1864 and 1867; however, it is possible that some Medina family members arrived ca. 1862 and that the family did not permanently relocate to Colorado until slightly later.

<sup>32</sup> Daniel Medina, email, June 14, 2015; Daniel Medina, phone interview, April 12, 2018; Joan Lavrich, phone interview, March 17, 2018.

<sup>33</sup> "The Martinez & Medina Ditch," Water Court Decree, August 10, 1903, <https://dwr.state.co.us/Tools/WaterRights/Transactions>. The *acequia* is outside the nomination boundary; only real property, per 36 CFR 60.6, and not water rights are the subject of this nomination.

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their crops in the northern Colorado gold fields, at Fort Union, and in other areas of Colorado and New Mexico during the pre-railroad years.

Agapito Medina received patent to his 156-acre homestead from the U.S. government in 1884. He died in late August 1890, when he was carried away in the flood waters of the Purgatoire River. His family managed to escape unharmed. His body was found four days later and he was buried in the Medina Cemetery at Medina Plaza. His wife continued to operate the farm with the help of her sons, Jose Maria and Jose Guadalupe, and their wives. An older son, Julian, daughter-in-law, Clara, and their eight children lived nearby as well. Julian Medina was a rancher and a principal member of the *penitente* brotherhood, *El Sociedad de Nuestro Padre Jesus de Nazareno*. He was also active in political affairs in the community.

The Medina homestead, along with many others, experienced changes at the turn of the twentieth century. In a controversial decision in 1887, the U.S. Supreme Court affirmed the Maxwell Land Grant Company's claim that it was the rightful owner of a 1.7 million-acre Mexican land grant established in 1843 that stretched from New Mexico into Las Animas County and included the Upper Purgatoire River Valley, its tributaries, and the eastern half of the Culebra Peaks; land that was known to be rich in coal, timber, and grazing for cattle. Settlers had been allowed to settle on the grant until a new owner took over in 1885 and some began to be evicted. By 1900, coal mining interests owned the grant and began acquiring the right-of-way for a railroad line to haul coal to a rail hub at Jansen (Chimayoses), Colorado. At this time, those settlers who had managed to retain ownership of their land, including the Medinas, had their pastureland and fields cut in two by the tracks of the Colorado and Wyoming Railway, owned by the Colorado Fuel & Iron Company. This situation was described by Daniel Medina, Jr., who experienced it personally:

The railroad that was built encompassed part of the Medina property and had a detrimental effect on the family and the surrounding community. It was built without input or permission from the community. The tracks were built on part of the Medina property. A fence was also built along both sides of the tracks for safety reasons. This divided the Medina property and made it difficult to cross the tracks to get to the other side. It was impossible to put cattle on the other side. Also, in order to cross to the other side a person had to travel a long distance. The other ranchers along the valley were faced with the same problems after the railroad was built.

Traditional crops were grown on the homestead and south of the church until the 1940s when Agapito Medina's grandson, Daniel Medina, Sr., sold the parcel south of the church to Frank Parsons. In the mid-1950s, a second parcel south of Highway 12 was sold to the Primero School District.

### Our Lady of Guadalupe Church and Medina Cemetery

Hispano settlers in the Upper Purgatoire Valley region were most often devout Catholics. The first Catholic church in the region, Holy Trinity, was founded in 1866 in Trinidad, on land donated by Don Felipe Baca. The Reverend Pedro Juan Munnecon, a missionary from Holland, was appointed the first pastor by the Most Reverend John Baptist Lamy, Bishop of Santa Fe, as Colorado had no bishop at that time. In March 1868, Reverend Joseph Machebeuf was named Vicar Apostolic of Colorado and Utah and first visited Holy Trinity on November 1, 1868. At the time, mass was held in a small adobe church with a dirt roof and floor. Holy Trinity would occupy the modest adobe building until 1885, when a grand new church was completed.<sup>34</sup>

For many settlers, Holy Trinity was too far away to attend mass regularly, and several families built chapels or small churches in the *placitas* and plazas along the Purgatoire River Valley (Figure 3). Presumably not long after the Medinas arrived ca. 1867, they constructed an adobe church west of their homestead to serve the spiritual needs of the family and their neighbors. The presence of *vigas* suggest that, when first constructed, the church may have been a simple adobe building consisting of four walls and a flat roof, much like the original Holy Trinity Church. The Medina family dedicated the church to Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe (Our Lady of Guadalupe).

Jesuit priests Reverend Charles M. Pinto and Reverend Alexander Leone replaced Father Munnecon in 1875. A third Jesuit, Reverend Joseph Montenarelli, arrived in October 1876 to help minister to the widely scattered congregation. The parish comprised about 4,700 square miles and it was "strenuous work to visit regularly the twenty-seven villages, and to

<sup>34</sup> *History of Holy Trinity Parish, Trinidad, Colorado.*

[http://www.trinidadcatholic.org/index\\_files/History%20of%20Most%20Holy%20Trinity%20Church.pdf](http://www.trinidadcatholic.org/index_files/History%20of%20Most%20Holy%20Trinity%20Church.pdf), 2. Accessed July 2019.

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take care of the many sick calls most of them reached by traveling on horseback over rough and often almost impassible roads.”<sup>35</sup> The church at the Medina *placita* was presumably one of the villages visited by the priests of Holy Trinity.

Descendants of the Duran and Medina families remember being told by elders that an area east of the church was once surrounded by a white picket fence and served as a burial ground early in the church's history, noting that they were told not to walk or park their cars in that area. While this is possible, no physical evidence exists today and further investigation would be necessary to confirm the existence of early burials near the church. Beginning as early as 1890, most likely earlier, local families buried their loved ones in a cemetery established to the northwest of the church.

Priests were seldom able to visit the outlying isolated churches regularly, often visiting only a few times each year. As a supplement to the guidance of priests, orders of Catholic laymen in New Mexico, and later in Colorado, formed fraternal organizations called *Los Hermanos Penitentes* (The Brotherhood of Penitents) in individual *placitas*. The *hermanos* not only kept religious services active, but served as a charitable organization at a time when government-sponsored services were non-existent; they helped widows, orphans, the disabled, the injured; gave advice about legal matters; prepared gravesites; and performed burial services if a priest was not available. Photographer and author Nancy Hunter Warren concisely summarized the principles of the *penitente* brotherhood in her book, *Villages of Hispanic New Mexico*:

In addition to their annual commemoration of the Passion of Jesus during Holy Week, the brothers have a year-round commitment to imitate His life through unobtrusive acts of charity and mutual aid, fostering by their example the ideals of Christian morality and brotherly love among the people of the villages. The value of the *hermanos* service to their communities was incalculable, and their contributions to early village life played an important role in the survival of the traditional Hispanic lifestyle.<sup>36</sup>

A *penitente morada* (meeting house) and its associated Catholic chapel were often separate buildings; however, Our Lady of Guadalupe Church became both starting on June 2, 1902, when a deed was recorded transferring ownership of the church from Agapito Medina's heirs to the officers of the *Sociedad de Nuestro Padre de Jesus de Nazareno*, also known as the Penitente Brotherhood. Agapito and Maria Vitalia's son, Julian, was an influential member and official of the brotherhood. The society was "to use or occupy as their local headquarters for all purposes, uses and worship, and to take good care of said premises and keep them clean and always ready to the order of the general council."<sup>37</sup> Thus, the building was presumably used for two purposes—mass and church services for the public, and meetings of the local *penitente* brotherhood. The meetings of the brotherhood ended at the church sometime before 1929 and documentation of their activities during their occupation of the church is lacking. Nevertheless, certain events are traditional to all *penitente* societies in the regions of southern Colorado and Northern New Mexico. Robert Romero, *Hermano Mayor* of the *Nuestro Padre Jesus de Nazareno Penitente Society* of the Long's Canyon Morada at El Rito contributed the following information:

Re-creating Passion Week (also known as Holy Week, or *Semana Santa*) is one of the most significant events and almost everyone in the community at that time would have participated in some way. A year in advance, volunteers offered to donate provisions for the following year's festivities. Preparations begin the previous week with men gathering firewood and women planning and cooking special dishes. Everyone was invited to some events, particularly meals on Holy Saturday and Easter Sunday. Children, too, were involved as two young girls (called Veronicas) were chosen every year to represent St. Veronica, who wiped the face of Christ with a cloth, and a man was selected to represent St. John (San Juan), who helped Christ carry the cross. The trail representing the path Christ walked to his crucifixion (called El Calvario) is generally located not far from the *morada*, and is marked with crosses representing the Twelve Stations of the Cross.<sup>38</sup>

In 1931, the deed to the church reverted back to Medina family ownership, stating, "For many years past the *Society La Morada de Guadalupe* has not functioned or used the property and decided to dispose of it and sell to Daniel Medina for

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 5.

<sup>36</sup> Nancy Hunter Warren, *Villages of Hispanic New Mexico* (Santa Fe, NM: School of American Research Press, 1987), 39

<sup>37</sup> Warranty Deed, Book 118, Page 222, June 2, 1902. Grantors: Vitalia T. Medina, Maria Medina, Eleanor M. Sisneros, Julian Medina, Beatrice M. Martinez, Guadalupe Medina, Reymunda M. Vigil, Jose Maria Medina, Widow and Heirs of Agapito Medina, deceased, to Grantee: Society de Nuestro Padre Jesus de Nazareno and Successors in Office. Medina Family records.

<sup>38</sup> Robert Romero, *Hermano Mayor*, La Fraternidad de Nuestro Padre Jesus (Penitente Brotherhood), El Rito, Long's Canyon, Colorado, phone interview with Diane Mason, July 27, 2018.



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\$150.”<sup>39</sup> In 1929, the *Morada de Guadalupe* apparently moved from Medina Plaza to Penitente Canyon, about 1.5 miles east of Medina Plaza near Velasquez Plaza on County Road 41.2, where they constructed a new meeting hall (5LA.9124).

Religious icons in the church would likely have been hand-carved wood or painted-wood slabs, made by trained artisans called *santeros*. Daniel Medina said he remembers “a wood statue of Christ on the Cross, located on the wall at the center of the altar” and believes it was hand-carved.<sup>40</sup> His sister, Joan Lavrich also recalled the cross.<sup>41</sup> Plaster statues generally came into common usage when Jesuit priests were assigned to the local parishes. The church never had electricity. Kerosene lamps attached to the walls were used to illuminate the church interior. Candles were used on the altar.<sup>42</sup>

The church was not just where religious events took place. It was the center of Hispano life. Every day was tedious and hard, and not only was it an honor and responsibility to take care of the church, but it was also an opportunity to socialize. The constant deterioration of adobe walls brought parishioners together once or twice a year to re-mud the exterior walls. Customarily, repairs most often took place just before the special day honoring the patron saint of the church. The men gathered materials, equipment, and prepared the mixture. Traditionally the women applied the mud, using their bare hands or a piece of sheepskin. The ladies enjoyed visiting as they worked on the exterior walls or whitewashed the inside walls and possibly hung a new *manta de techo*. The women also cleaned the church and washed the altar linens. This gathering kept the church in good condition and brought about family cohesiveness. The community took care of the church and did the same during the years *los hermanos* occupied the church.

Daniel Medina, great-grandson of Agapito Medina, attended Mass at the church prior to its closure in 1959. He remembers that the men and boys sat on the left side, the women and girls on the right side.<sup>43</sup> The Medina family recalls that on the special day honoring Our Lady of Guadalupe, December 9, men, women, and children from the plaza and surrounding areas would gather to celebrate. A framed printed image of Our Lady of Guadalupe was attached to the top of a pole which was held in the air by the priest and carried in procession. In May, a similar event took place with the parishioners and children who were receiving First Holy Communion walking in procession around the outside of the church. They sang songs pertaining to Our Blessed Mother, one of which was “O Maria, Madre Mia.” All were sung in Spanish.<sup>44</sup>

The church closed about 1959, most likely due to a shortage of priests, and has remained vacant since that time.<sup>45</sup> The descendants of Agapito Medina continued to care for the church after its closure, believing that church property and the associated cemetery remained under family ownership. In actuality, the church and cemetery property had been sold by the family many years ago and sold again since that time. On November 15, 2018, after extensive efforts made on behalf of the family, ownership of the church and church grounds was returned to the Medina family through execution of a quit claim deed. The Medina Cemetery property is currently under the ownership of Richard S. and Sylvia A. Lopez of Weston.

## State Highway 12

State Highway 12 was originally a trail along the Purgatoire River used by the Ute, Apache, and other Native Americans to travel between the grasslands east of present-day Trinidad and the Sangre de Cristo Mountains, a subrange of the Rocky Mountains. Early Hispano settlers presumably used the trail when traveling from Trinidad into the Purgatoire River Valley during the 1860s and situated several settlements and churches directly adjacent to its pathway. After 1874, the trail became an established wagon and stage road between Trinidad and Stonewall connecting the small *placitas* within the Purgatoire River Valley with one another and Trinidad, the largest settlement in the region and its economic center. Improved by volunteers in 1911, likely to accommodate automobile traffic, it became known as the Stonewall Road.

<sup>39</sup> Warranty Deed, Book 420, Page 519, Feb. 2, 1931. Society of Nuestro Padre, Jesus de Nazareno, Grantor, to Daniel Medina, Grantee. Medina Family records.

<sup>40</sup> Daniel Medina, email communication with Diane Mason, June 19, 2015.

<sup>41</sup> Joan Lavrich, phone interview with Diane Mason, March 17, 2018.

<sup>42</sup> Joan Lavrich, email communication with Diane Mason, June 15, 2015

<sup>43</sup> Daniel Medina, email to Diane Mason, April 4, 2016.

<sup>44</sup> Joan Lavrich, email communication with Diane Mason, June 12, 2015; Lee Rosenquist, letter to Diane Mason, 2015.

<sup>45</sup> Daniel Medina, email communication Diane Mason, June 14, 2015.; Joan Lavrich, phone interview with Diane Mason, March 17, 2018.

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The segment of roadway within the nomination boundary was identified as State Highway 12 on state highway maps dated 1926, 1927, 1929, and 1938. During that period, State Highway 12 was not on the federal aid system and only extended from Trinidad west to Stonewall. From Stonewall to La Veta, the highway was designated as State Highway 111, and from La Veta to Walsenburg the route was designated State Highway 10. At this time, only State Highway 10 was part of the federal aid system, which was approved by the Secretary of Agriculture in 1922.<sup>46</sup> Under the Works Progress Administration (WPA), many Colorado roads were improved in the 1930s. Most WPA work was concentrated in rural Colorado where crews widened, graded, and resurfaced 5,065 miles of farm-to-market roads. Important WPA projects included the reconstruction and oil-surfacing of 38 miles of State Highway 12 west of Trinidad in 1936.<sup>47</sup>

State highway maps indicate that the entire loop from Trinidad to Walsenburg was designated as State Highway 12 around 1968. For the last 14 miles of this loop, State Highway 12 joins U.S. 160 into Walsenburg. In 1987, State Highway 12 was designated a Colorado State Byway and in 1990 it became a U.S. National Forest Byway. The highway's designation as a Byway was based on its scenic beauty and various historic events and legends associated with the highway corridor. Among these legends are stories of early Spanish explorers, the coal-mining industry, and Native American cultures.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Colorado Department of Transportation, Office of Environmental Services, *Historic Resources Survey Report, Weston East, State Highway 12*, CDOT Project STA 012A-034 (December 2001), 7.

<sup>47</sup> Autobee and Dobson-Brown, E-34.

<sup>48</sup> Colorado Department of Transportation, Office of Environmental Services, 7.

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Warranty Deed, Book 420, Page 519. Grantor: Society of Nuestro Padre Jesus de Nazareno. Grantee: Daniel Medina, Feb. 2, 1931. Medina Family records.

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**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # HABS CO-57
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
  - Other State agency
  - Federal agency
  - Local government
  - University
  - Other
- Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): 5LA.1966

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**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** 2 acres  
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

**UTM References**

Datum:  
**NAD 1927** \_\_\_\_\_ or **NAD 1983** X  
(Insert additional UTM references as needed.)

1	<u>13</u> Zone	<u>517810</u> Easting	<u>4109324</u> Northing	2	<u>13</u> Zone	<u>517872</u> Easting	<u>4109321</u> Northing
3	<u>13</u> Zone	<u>517862</u> Easting	<u>4109258</u> Northing	4	<u>13</u> Zone	<u>517858</u> Easting	<u>4109212</u> Northing
5	<u>13</u> Zone	<u>517791</u> Easting	<u>4109195</u> Northing	6	<u>13</u> Zone	<u>517783</u> Easting	<u>4109227</u> Northing
7	<u>13</u> Zone	<u>517799</u> Easting	<u>4109262</u> Northing	8	_____ Zone	_____ Easting	_____ Northing

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The Our Lady of Guadalupe Church and Medina Cemetery boundary encompasses 2 acres of land and generally follows legal parcel lines as shown on the Nomination Boundary Map that follows. The boundary can be described as follows: Beginning at the northwest corner of the fence surrounding the Medina Cemetery (Point 1), the boundary extends 201.74' to the northeast corner of the fence (Point 2), then 202.16' to the southeast corner of the fence (Point 3); then extends approximately 153' to the south, traveling across State Highway 12 to the eastern corner of the triangular parcel containing Our Lady of Guadalupe Church (Point 4); then 217.32' to the southwest corner of the church parcel (Point 5); then 91.57' to the northwest corner of the church parcel (Point 6); then extends approximately 130' to the north, traveling across State Highway 12 to the southwest corner of the cemetery fence (Point 7); then 204.35' to return to the point of beginning (Point 1).

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The selected boundary contains all of the resources historically associated with Our Lady of Guadalupe Church.

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Diane Mason with Alice Romero (for property owner), edited by Amy Unger, History Colorado  
organization \_\_\_\_\_ date January 3, 2019  
street & number 819 W. Topeka Avenue telephone 719-846-3792  
city or town Trinidad state CO zip code 81082  
e-mail marsi1@mindspring.com

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### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) or **Google Earth** map indicating the property's location.  
A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

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### Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: Our Lady of Guadalupe Church and Medina Cemetery.

City or Vicinity: Medina Plaza

County: Las Animas County

State: Colorado

Photographer: Marsi Mason, unless noted otherwise.

Date Photographed: October 13, 2018, unless noted otherwise.

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

- 1 of 25: South section of cemetery with north wall of church in background, camera facing south.
- 2 of 25: Church, east and north sides, Colorado Highway 12 in foreground, camera facing west.
- 3 of 25: Church, south and east sides, camera facing northwest.
- 4 of 25: Church, south and west sides, camera facing northeast.
- 5 of 25: Church, south wall of rectory, west wall of nave, camera facing northeast (Cindy Abeyta, August 17, 2018).
- 6 of 25: Church, south wall of rectory, camera facing north (Cindy Abeyta, August 17, 2018).
- 7 of 25: Church, west wall of rectory, camera facing southeast (Cindy Abeyta, August 17, 2018).
- 8 of 25: Church, north and west sides, camera facing southeast (December 25, 2017).
- 9 of 25: Church, north wall, camera facing south (Cindy Abeyta, August 17, 2018).
- 10 of 25: Church, foundation on north side, Colorado Highway 12 at left, Medina Plaza in background, camera facing east.
- 11 of 25: Church belfry, camera facing northeast (December 25, 2017).
- 12 of 25: Church, south gable, camera facing north (Cindy Abeyta, August 17, 2018).
- 13 of 25: Church entrance, south façade, camera facing north (Cindy Abeyta, August 17, 2018).
- 14 of 25: Window detail, east wall. Note metal covering sill. Camera facing west.
- 15 of 25: Church, nave, interior east wall, south window, camera facing east (December 25, 2017).
- 16 of 25: Church interior, nave and chancel, camera facing north (December 25, 2017).
- 17 of 25: Nave interior, *vigas* and remnants of ceiling cloth, camera facing northwest (Cindy Abeyta, August 17, 2018).
- 18 of 25: Nave interior, camera facing south (December 25, 2017).
- 19 of 25: Nave interior, former location of organ platform, camera facing southeast (December 25, 2017).
- 20 of 25: Cemetery entrance gate, camera facing north (Amy Unger, September 8, 2018).

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21 of 25: Cemetery, metal fence, camera facing north (December 25, 2017).

22 of 25: Cemetery, natural stone marker inscribed with cross, camera facing north (December 25, 2017).

23 of 25: Cemetery, military headstone, placed at grave of Agapito Medina, camera facing north (December 25, 2017).

24 of 25: Cemetery, elaborate *cerquita* (wood picket grave fencing), camera facing southeast (December 25, 2017).

25 of 25: Cemetery, iron cross grave marker, camera facing northwest (December 25, 2017).

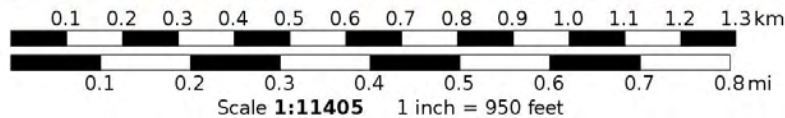
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**USGS Topographic Map**



Mercator Projection  
WGS84  
USNG Zone 13SEB  
CalTopo





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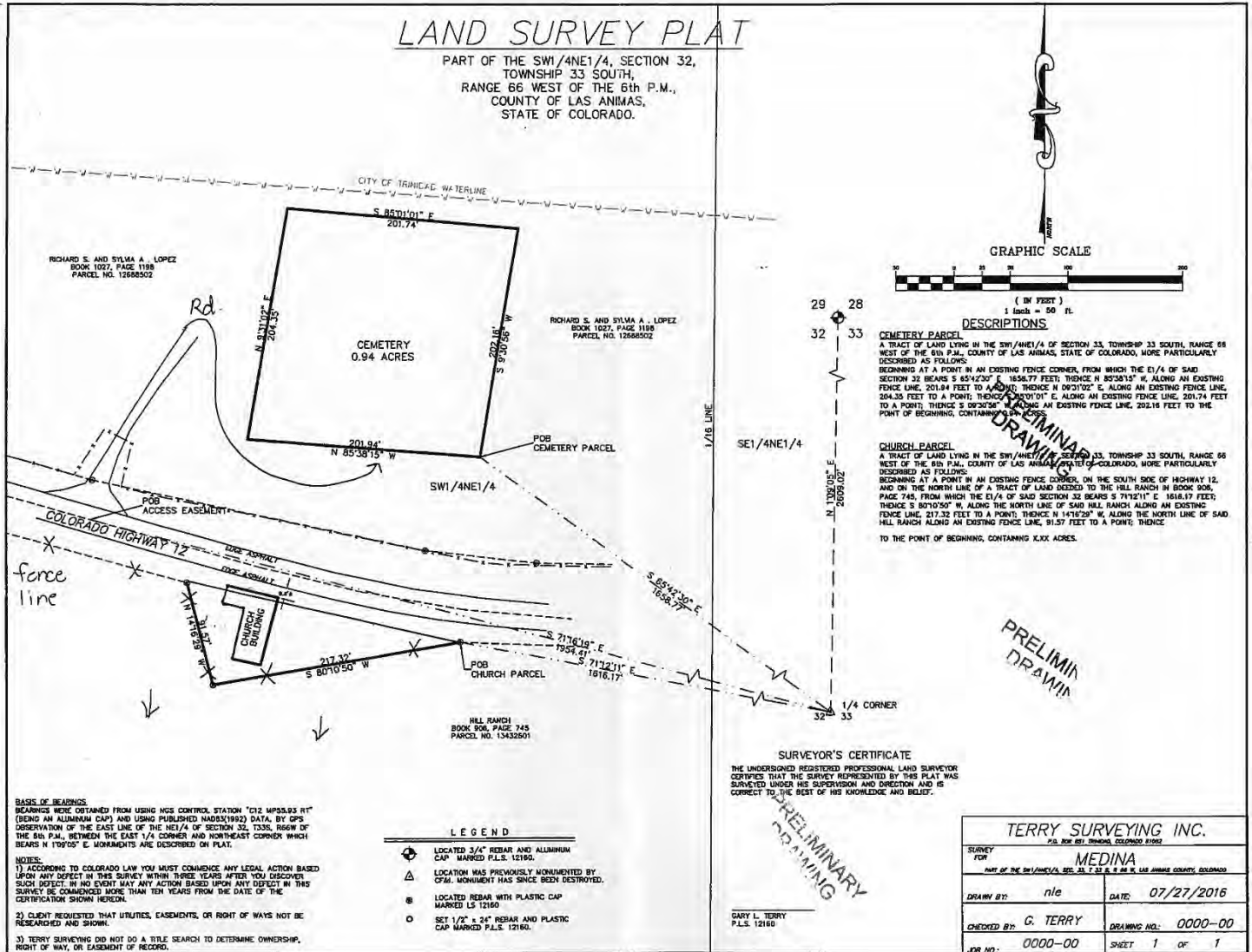
**Nomination Boundary Map**



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Land Survey Plat



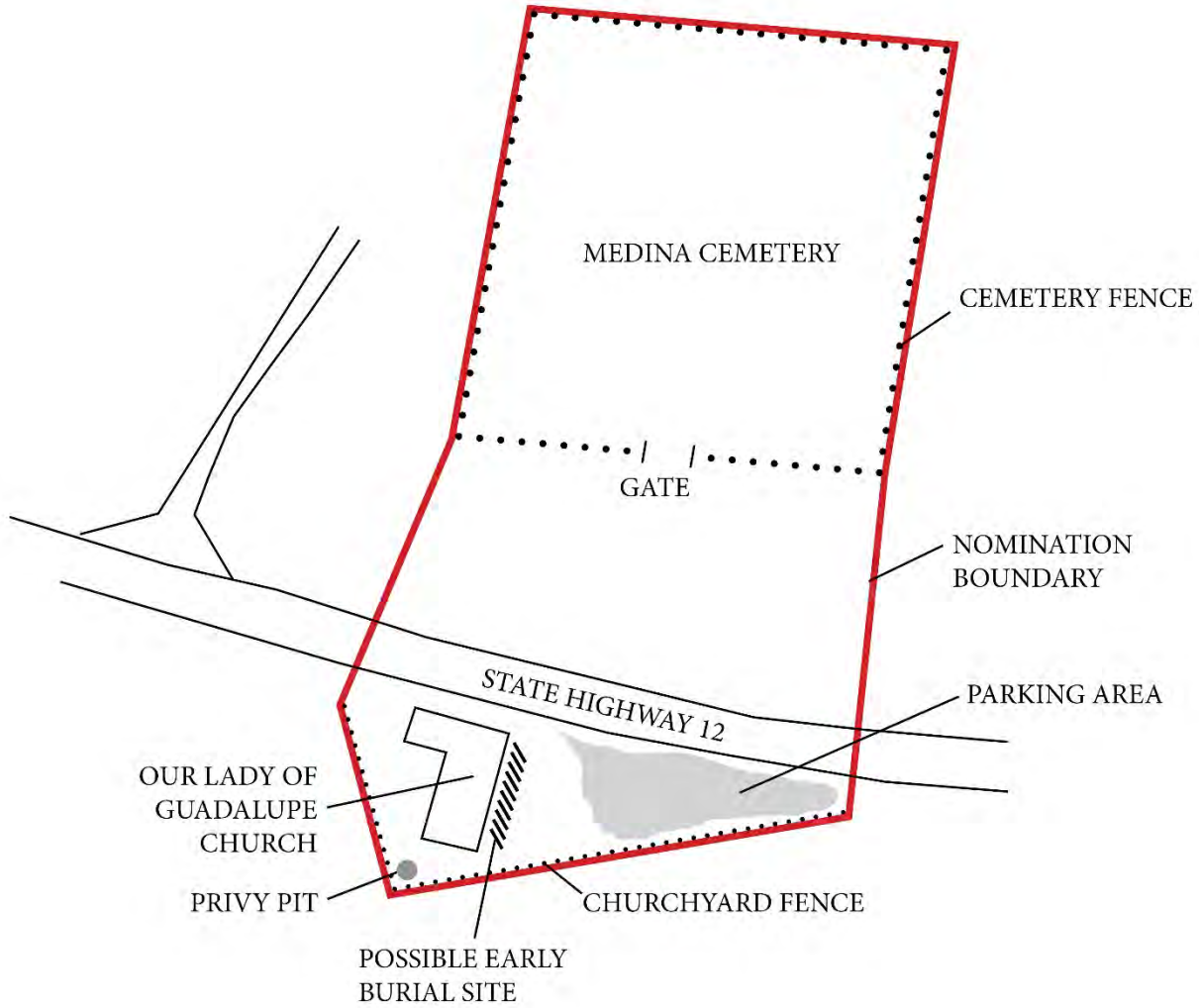
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**Sketch Map**



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**Historic Figures**



Figure 1: Holy Trinity Church and missions ca. 1900-1910. Source: History Colorado, Stephen Hart Library, Accession 84.193.916.

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Figure 2: Detail from Figure 1, documenting the Our Lady of Guadalupe Chapel mission church in Guadalupe, Colorado, ca. 1900-10. According to the Medina family, the community of Medina Plaza was historically known as Guadalupe and this photograph documents Our Lady of Guadalupe Church prior to the remodeling of its roof, gable ends, and belfry to their current appearance. Source: History Colorado, Stephen Hart Library, Accession 84.193.916.



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Figure 4: Photographer Frederick D. Nichols documented the church in August 1936. Source: Library of Congress, Historic American Buildings Survey # CO-57.

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Figure 5: Alphonso Trujillo and bride outside the church on June 28, 1948.  
Source: Alphonso Trujillo.



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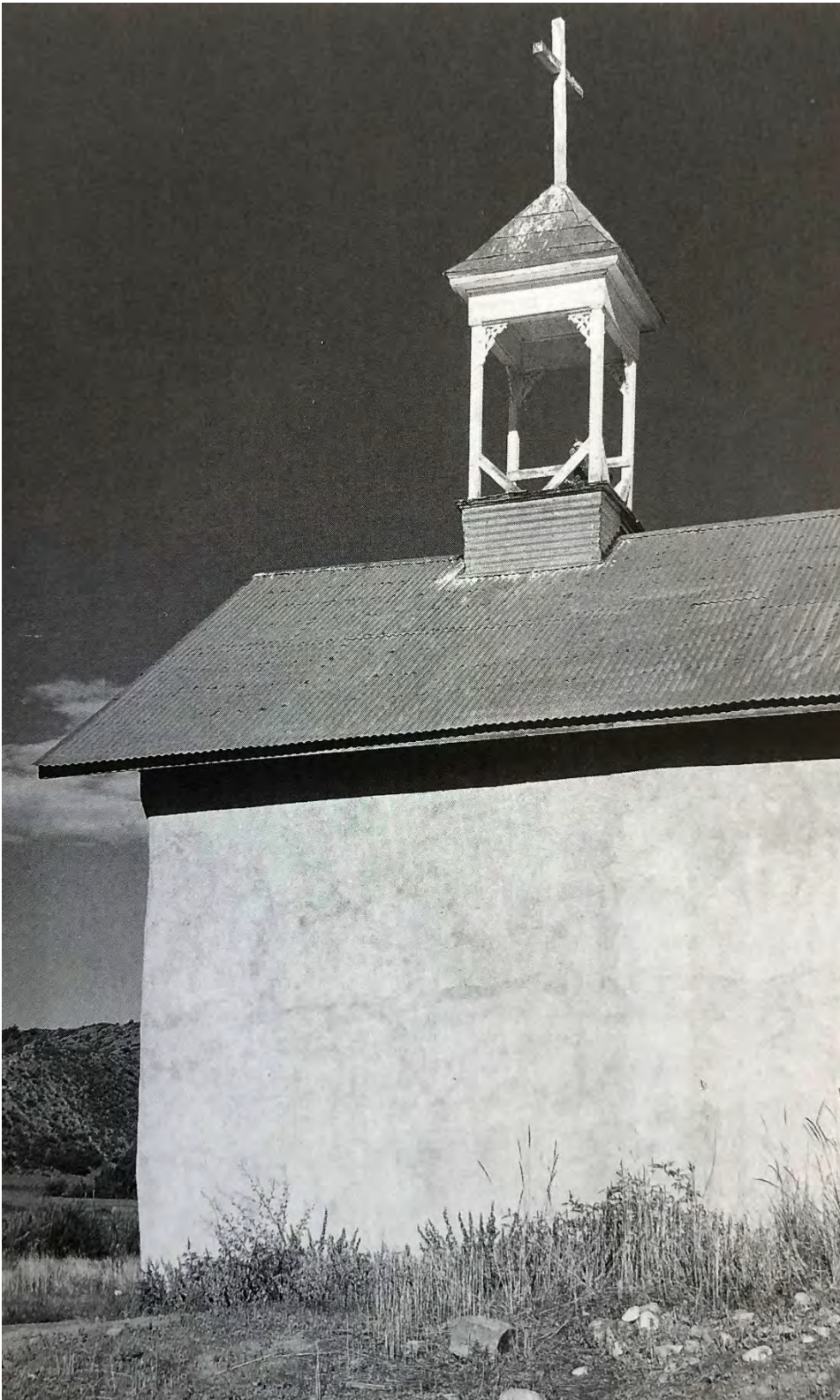


Figure 6: Church's east wall, photographed by Robert Adams in 1974. Source: *The Architecture and Art of Early Hispanic Colorado*.

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Figure 7: Sandstone cemetery marker in Medina Cemetery, photographed by Robert Adams in 1974. Source: *The Architecture and Art of Early Hispanic Colorado*.



Figure 8: Wrought iron cemetery marker in Medina Cemetery, photographed by Robert Adams in 1974. Source: *The Architecture and Art of Early Hispanic Colorado*.

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Figure 9: A *cerquita* (wood picket grave fencing), photographed in the Medina Cemetery by Robert Adams in 1974. Source: *The Architecture and Art of Early Hispanic Colorado*.



Figure 10: Altar and retablo, circa 1970s-80s. Source: Daniel Medina

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Figure 11: Exterior and interior of San Isidro Church in Vigil Plaza, documented by photographer Frederick D. Nichols in August 1936. Source: Library of Congress, Historic American Buildings Survey # CO-57

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Figure 12: Agapito Medina residence, built ca. 1867, has been extensively remodeled over time. Photographed ca. 1956. Courtesy of Daniel Medina.

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Figure 13: Surviving Hispano churches in the plaza settlements along State Highway 12 between Trinidad and Stonewall. Clockwise from top left: Holy Child Chapel at Tijeras Plaza (5LA.1970); St. Ignatius Catholic Church at Segundo (Los Barros); Our Lady of Guadalupe Church at Medina Plaza (5LA.1966); San Isidro Church at Vigil Plaza (5LA.1105); Our Lord of Esquipula Church at Weston (formerly La Junta Plaza) (5LA.5929); Our Lady of Mount Carmel Chapel at Cordova Plaza (5LA.5923). Our Lady of Guadalupe Church photograph by Marsi Mason, all others by Amy Unger, August 2019.

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Las Animas County, CO  
County and State



Figure 14: A comparison of the 1895 USGS topographic map (top) and with current conditions (bottom) shows that the alignment of State Highway 12 has changed very little since the 1890s. Arrows indicate the location of Our Lady of Guadalupe Church and Medina Cemetery. Source: <https://ngmdb.usgs.gov/topoview/> and Google Earth.

Our Lady of Guadalupe Church and Medina  
Cemetery

Name of Property

Las Animas County, CO

County and State

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.



















































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# HISTORY *Colorado*

October 3, 2019

Joy Beasley  
Keeper of the National Register  
National Park Service  
National Register Program  
Mail Stop 7228  
1849 C St, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20240



Dear Ms. Beasley:

We are pleased to submit for your review the enclosed National Register of Historic Places nomination for Our Lady of Guadalupe Church and Medina Cemetery (5LA.1966) in Las Animas County, Colorado.

The Colorado Historic Preservation Review Board reviewed the nomination at its meeting on September 20, 2019. The board voted unanimously to recommend to the State Historic Preservation Officer that the property met the criteria for listing in the National Register.

The enclosed disk contains the true and correct copy of the nomination for Our Lady of Guadalupe Church and Medina Cemetery to the National Register of Historic Places.

We look forward to the formal listing of this property. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me by phone at 303-866-4684 or by email at [amy.unger@state.co.us](mailto:amy.unger@state.co.us).

Sincerely,

Amy Unger  
National and State Register Historian  
(303) 866-4684  
[amy.unger@state.co.us](mailto:amy.unger@state.co.us)

Enclosures  
CDs (2)  
Signature Page