



Delta County Economic Development Strategy

Prepared by: Better City

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Background

Previous phases of this project have focused on economic and market conditions to identify potential areas for economic growth in Delta County. This phase presents an economic development strategy and action plan with specific steps to implement the strategy. It addresses the following questions:

- What role should public agencies play in expanding primary jobs in the area?
- What broad areas of economic development have the most potential?
- What is an effective branding concept to best present the counties and differentiate the counties to critical markets and customers?
- What specific actions can create new and significant synergy with existing economic resources? How should these actions be prioritized and what organizational alignment is needed for their implementation?
- What actions can create new and significant synergy with existing economic resources and clusters?
- Are there new partnerships that should be developed to implement recommended strategies?
- Where should public and private partners concentrate human and financial capital for the greatest return on investment?
- What specific strategies can be identified to advance priority objectives?
- In what areas should public and private partners consider divesting human and financial capital due to low probability of a positive return on investment?
- What capacity needs to be developed and where, specifically, can resources be found to successfully implement proposed recommendations.

Strategic Recommendations

Overview

As identified in the first two phases of this project, Delta County (“the County”) has a number of opportunities to enhance economic prosperity and add jobs in the face of recent economic decline due to mining job losses. To be effective, an economic recovery strategy must capitalize on these opportunities, and where possible, mitigate the challenges facing the County. The proposed strategy in this report aims to create high wage jobs by focusing on differentiated export oriented businesses, fostering entrepreneurship, developing community assets to make Delta a place where people want to visit, work, and live.

Phase 2 analysis of County economic indicators, competitive advantages, and industry trends indicated that several industries in the County are well positioned for future growth. These are construction, agriculture, manufacturing, education, and retail trade. Tourism was also identified as having potential for moderate growth. Of these industries, agriculture, manufacturing, and tourism are export-oriented businesses that bring outside money into the County. Construction, education, and retail trade primarily service the local market. Because local industries will rise and fall with the success or decline of export-oriented businesses, efforts to enhance economic prosperity in the County should be focused on the export-oriented industries of agriculture, manufacturing, and tourism. By focusing on these three industries, the County will see the greatest return on its economic development investment.

Branding

Since this strategy focuses on external markets, a consistent, authentic County brand is critical for differentiating the County to potential consumers of County goods and services. Branding the

County as a national organic center of excellence provides the greatest opportunity to attract regional and national attention and provide synergies with existing and potential industry clusters. This brand takes advantage of the existing competence the County has in organic agriculture. The establishment of organic agriculture as a selling point for the County has synergies with traditional agriculture, tourism, and manufacturing.

A key component to making this brand authentic is the completion of a number of projects including building retail venues, developing expertise, hosting conferences, expanding food processing, and increasing production. These items will be discussed in greater detail in subsequent sections of this report.

Role of Public Agencies

The private sector is the primary driver of economic prosperity and the free market is the most efficient means to allocate resources. However, public agencies also play an important role in implementing this strategy. Local government and other organizations are vital in creating an environment where private enterprise can grow and expand and addressing issues the free market cannot.

One key area of public involvement involves public goods such as public safety, infrastructure, and parks that benefit an entire community. The market often fails to provide these goods because individuals know they will benefit from the goods regardless of whether they are the ones who pay for them. Having well developed public assets is important in attracting both businesses and workers to a community.

Other areas where public agencies can help overcome market failures involve positive externalities, or benefits that a private development provides to other businesses but from which it does

not capture revenue. For example, a new downtown development will increase property values and bring additional business to surrounding businesses making the total value of a project larger than what the developer receives. If the projected private returns for a project are too low to make a project feasible, but the total value of the project would make it feasible, the public sector can bridge that gap through tools such as tax increment financing or other incentives.

On the other hand negative externalities, such as a property's neglected maintenance reducing neighboring property values, can discourage investment. Public agencies responsible for zoning and building codes can avert these consequences through a carefully planned regulatory environment. Such regulations and administrative burdens should be streamlined so as to address the issues at hand without imposing undue time or financial costs.

The public sector can also help balance competing interests. In Delta County both agriculture and extractive industries have a long history of contributing to the local economy. These two industries can be in conflict with each other over issues such as soil and water quality, split estates, and aesthetics. Public agencies play an important role in such cases, as they are able to make strategic decisions about how to carry out their regulatory duties in a way that provides the greatest benefit to the community.

Projects

As previously stated, efforts to expand the economy should be focused on the export oriented industries of agriculture, manufacturing, and tourism. Projects associated with this strategy must be transformative, changing the market dynamics and kick starting a virtuous cycle of development. Given the strong agricultural foundation the County enjoys, a strategy that focuses

primarily on agriculture and identifies synergies between agriculture and the manufacturing and tourism industries will likely have the greatest success. The following projects were selected due to their ability to impact the market dynamic or address a current need. The net effect of the projects will be to generate regional and national awareness for the County and increase demand for its goods and services. The proposed projects are:

- Create a nationally recognized Sustainable Agricultural Center of Excellence;
- Build a destination retail venue for locally produced food;
- Establish a regional food hub;
- Expand and add food processing operations;
- Develop a manufacturing innovation center focused on agricultural technology;
- Build a national brand select service hotel downtown and develop a corridor to the river;
- Develop recreational assets on lakes and along the river, and improve trails;
- Build additional farm laborer housing.

Many of these projects build off of and enhance the County brand as a nationally recognized center of excellence for sustainable agriculture. Food manufacturing and an agricultural technology innovation center expand the agricultural focus into manufacturing. The development of a hotel and recreational venues offer expanded tourism opportunities to visitors and increase the potential output of the tourism industry. Together, these projects offer opportunities to capture additional revenue and increase jobs in existing segments of the economy and expand into new sectors.

Sustainable Agriculture Center of Excellence

In order to successfully brand the County as a nationally recognized sustainable agriculture center of excellence, steps will need to be

taken to both promote and validate the claim. A three-prong approach is recommended involving identifying and achieving key production metrics, establishing a reputation for industry expertise, and public relations efforts to increase awareness of the brand.

Production: In order to be considered the capital of sustainable agriculture, production needs to confirm the position. This will not be an easy task as there are Counties such as San Diego County, CA with over 300 organic producers, which is 10 times the number in Delta, or Sonoma CA that produces almost \$200M of organic output per year, which is almost 100 times the output of the County. The County is currently ranks #1 in Colorado and #83 (down from #44 in 2007) nationwide in total number of organic operations. It ranks #6 in Colorado and #171 in total organic production value.



Given that the County is unlikely to overtake the largest Counties in these categories, working with sustainable growers to identify an alternative metric where the County can claim a prominent position nationwide will be important in developing the County brand. This metric may be based upon variety of sustainable agricultural offerings, operations per capita, operations per square mile, or some other measure. Following the identification of the metric, a plan

should be implemented to achieve levels of certification or production that are exceptional.

Expertise: The County should be recognized for its expertise in sustainable agricultural production through research efforts, facilities, and conferences that take place or are located in the County. The County should pursue opportunities to bring world-class agricultural research into the County. Partnerships with academic institutions will be vital in this regard. County organizations such as the Valley Organic Growers should be leveraged to identify additional sources of industry expertise. Additionally, the County hosts the Western Slope Soil Health Conference. Such events should be expanded and new conference and seminar opportunities should be identified.

Public Relations: The establishment of a sustainable agriculture center of excellence is an effort to bring additional businesses and visitors to the County. In order for this to work, people need to be aware of the County's strength in sustainable agriculture. Public relations efforts are vital in this regard. Inviting magazines and other publications to experience the offerings of the County can provide better and more impactful exposure than traditional advertising efforts. Calling oneself the capital of sustainable agriculture holds much less weight than a third party doing the same. A contract with a professional public relations firm with expertise in this niche may be required to carry out these public relations duties.

Partners: There are a number of key partners in the establishment of a sustainable agriculture center of excellence. Efforts to identify and meet production benchmarks will require close coordination with the Valley Organic Growers. Efforts to enhance the expertise found in the County will again involve the Valley Organic Growers as well as academic institutions such as Colorado State University, individuals

involved in the Western Slope Soil Health Conference, regional agricultural organizations, and others. Relationships with the Colorado Department of Agriculture will also be beneficial.

Synergies: The establishment of a sustainable agriculture center of excellence will create synergies with a number of existing and potential industries and businesses. Obviously, existing producers, retailers, and suppliers are the basis for the center of excellence, and they will benefit from greater awareness. Conventional agriculture, food processing and distribution will also benefit from increased demand for Delta County food and will provide a more rounded set of offerings coming from the County. Food manufacturers will also benefit by increased demand. Tourism related businesses will benefit from an additional draw to the area and in return will help spread the word regarding the sustainable agriculture center of excellence.

Funding: The primary federal funding opportunities for this effort come from the USDA. Additional state and private sources may also apply. For more detailed descriptions of these programs, please see Appendix A: Available Grants, Loans, & Incentive Programs.

- USDA
 - Specialty Crop Block Grant Program (SCBGP)
 - Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education program (SARE)
 - Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program (BFRDP)
 - Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)
 - Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI): Global Food Security
- State
 - Enrich Colorado Ag Grant Program
 - Colorado Tourism Office matching grant program.
- Private

- o Organic Valley’s Farmers Advocating for Organics (FAFO) fund

Obstacles: One key challenge in implementing this strategy is bringing the entire community together regardless of their involvement in the industry. Although most County residents are not involved in sustainable agriculture, supporting the industry as a key, differentiating feature of the County will be beneficial to all.

Capacity Development: Several key capacities need to be developed in order to establish the County as a Sustainable Agriculture Center of Excellence. Some of these capacities are the industry expertise items mentioned above. In order to put on conferences that have an impact on the industry, the County also needs to develop conference-planning capacity and develop venues where such conferences can be held. Additionally, public relations acumen is needed to successfully tell the County’s story to the rest of the country. This may involve a full time public relations position that will be responsible for promoting the County’s agricultural offerings.

Sustainable Agriculture Center of Excellence Impact:

Estimated Direct Jobs Created	5
Jobs Multiplier	1.27
Potential Total Jobs Created	6.36

Signature Venue

Closely tied to the establishment of a sustainable agriculture center of excellence is the development of a signature retail venue for locally produced agricultural products. A signature location will allow visitors to know that they have arrived at a hub of sustainable agriculture. It will provide a centralized location for local growers and ranchers to sell their products and be an attraction for visitors. A

venue located on Highway 50 provides the greatest access and visibility further enhancing the County’s brand to individuals that drive through the County.



The County is currently home to dozens of organic farms, and while many of these have roadside stands, offer tours, or provide other opportunities for the public to experience what they have to offer, these efforts are relatively small in scale. A large destination venue would allow visitors to taste, see, and purchase all of the County’s agricultural offerings in one location, and serve as a gateway to the County’s agriculture landscape. This location would serve as the home base for farm tour offerings, offer educational opportunities,

and be a reason for people driving on Highway 50 to stop and spend time in the County.



The venue or an adjacent property would house a farm to table restaurant offering guests the opportunity to dine on locally grown foods and creating an additional draw for highway traffic to stop and explore.

Partners: Key partners in the development of this venue include local agricultural producers and retailers, City officials, downtown property owners, the Delta Chamber of Commerce, VOGA, and DCED. The efforts to develop a signature venue will require coordination between County and City officials, private developers, organic and conventional agricultural producers and others.

Synergies: This development will have tremendous synergy with the establishment of a sustainable agriculture center of excellence. It will signal to visitors that they have arrived at a hub of sustainable agricultural production, will spread the word about the center of excellence, and will provide an outlet for producers. Conventional agriculture, food processing and distribution will also benefit

tremendously from the venue as they too will have an additional outlet for their production and brand awareness for all County produced products will increase. Tourism related businesses will benefit from an additional draw to the area and neighboring downtown businesses will benefit from a new destination on Main Street and increased property values due to the new development.

Funding: USDA will again be an important funding source for this project. Additional federal and state sources also apply. For more detailed descriptions of these programs, please see Appendix A: Available Grants, Loans, & Incentive Programs.

- USDA
 - Rural Business Development Grant (RBDG)
 - Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant Program (REDLG)
 - Farmers Market Promotion Program (FMPP)
- HHS
 - Community Economic Development Grants (CED)
- Treasury
 - New Market Tax Credit (NMTC)
- EDA
 - Economic Adjustment Assistance Program (EAA)
 - Technical Assistance Grant
- State
 - Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI) Grant
 - Enrich Colorado Ag Grant Program

Obstacles: The primary challenge for a project such as this is aligning the funding resources. The project will likely need funding from a variety of sources, including local incentives to appeal to a private developer.

Capacity Development: A key development that will need to occur in order to attract a private developer to a major project such as this will be the enactment of City building codes, maintenance standards,

and/or zoning ordinances to protect a developers investment in the community's core.

Signature Venue Impact:

Estimated Direct Jobs Created	15
Jobs Multiplier	1.11
Potential Total Jobs Created	16.65

Regional Food Hub

Coupled with the retail venue, the establishment of a regional food hub in Delta County that provides centralized distribution and marketing for locally grown foods will help agricultural producers across the County more efficiently reach the market.



The primary benefits and services of a regional food hub include:

- Market access for local foods
- Information flow and sharing
- Brokerage services
- Increasing market share by bundling
- Technical assistance and producer development
- Transportation and distribution

Additionally, food hubs allow small producers to gain bargaining power. In the United States, 75% of farms report annual sales of less than \$50,000, but only account for 3% of total sales. Meanwhile, farms with \$1,000,000 or more in annual sales represent less than 4% of farms but 66.4% of total sales¹. By pooling their efforts, small farms can gain leverage and increase profits. Food hubs also impact the broader economy. One study looking at the effect of food hubs found that for every dollar of food hub output, there was an additional \$0.63 generated in related sectors.²

Food hubs benefit from the a significant and growing demand for locally grown food, the definition of which varies but most often refers to food grown within 100-400 miles of where it is consumed. The National Grocers Association conducted a survey that revealed that 85% of consumers say availability of locally grown food plays a role in their grocery store selection.³

¹ MIT

² Schmit, Jablonski, and Kay, *Assessing the Economic Impacts of Regional Food Hubs: The Case of Regional Access*.

³ www.supermarket guru.com/public/pdf/Consumer-Panel-Survey-2011.pdf

Food hubs can be organized in a number of ways including private corporations, non-profits, co-ops, publicly held organizations, or informal agreements. The structure can change over time to meet the organizations needs. Table 1 shows the prevalence of a variety of organizational structures for food hubs nationwide.

Food Hub Legal Status	%
Privately Held	40%
Nonprofit	32%
Cooperative	21%
Publicly Held	5%
Informal	2%

Table 1: Food Hub Status

The USDA categorizes food hubs based upon their market model. Some focus on wholesale, some on retail, and some are a hybrid of both. Table 2 shows the prevalence of a variety of organizational structures for food hubs nationwide.

Market Model	%
Farm to business/ institution (F2B)	42%
Farm to consumer (F2C)	36%
Hybrid (both F2B & F2C)	22%

Table 2: Food Hub Market Models

One example of a regional food hub in Colorado is the High Plains Food Cooperative (HPFC)⁴. HPFC is a member-owner co-op with 194 members (40 producers and 154 consumers) that serves customers

⁴ USDA report



within a 300-mile radius of northeastern Colorado, with the goal of providing locally grown food from northeastern Colorado to western Kansas and the Front Range.⁵ HPFC operates a primarily online F2C model requiring little capital. It owns two delivery trailers and rents a warehouse in Denver.

It is recommended that the Delta County food hub operate a hybrid model with warehousing, marketing, and distribution services focused on wholesale and the retail venue previously discussed offering direct to consumer offerings. A for-profit structure allows for the adoption of business practices that are necessary for long-term reinvestment and sustainability.

Distribution: Addressing the logistics issues that face agricultural producers in the County will have a significant impact on the local economy. A report produced by the MIT Wealth Creation Clinic titled “Improving Systems of Distribution and Logistics for Regional Food Hubs”⁶ identifies a number of best practices. These include:

- Focusing on the coordination of runs as a first priority and then scale up based on the ability to fill loads
- Leasing trucks to mitigate initial capital costs and maintenance costs
- Efficiently scaling number and use of physical assets
- Forming partnerships with private carriers and distributors especially for longer hauls
- Identifying backhauling opportunities from a variety of industries
- Utilizing transportation innovations such as cross-docking warehouses and Transportation Management Systems.

⁵ <http://highplainsfood.org>

⁶

http://dusp.mit.edu/sites/dusp.mit.edu/files/attachments/project/Food%20Hub%20Report%2010_12_14.pdf

Marketing: The same report also identified best practices in food hub marketing and sales including:

- Creating a regional branding strategy
- Entering into agreements with anchor buyers along key transportation routes
- Having a strong commitment to and aggressively marketing the products from their suppliers.

Partners: Key partners for such a venture include agricultural producers, co-ops, value added food manufacturers such as Colorado Homestead Ranches, existing companies offering distribution or packing services such as Delta Elevator and High Quality Packing, and existing food retailers. Additionally, partnerships with the County, DCED, Cities, non-profit community, and Chamber of Commerce will be valuable.

Synergies: A regional food hub will create synergies across agricultural, manufacturing, transportation, and retail industries as they relate to food production and delivery. It will also benefit non-food related manufacturing and other businesses that utilize freight services, as potential backhauling opportunities will arise.

Funding: The following are potential funding sources for this project. For more detailed descriptions of these programs, please see Appendix A: Available Grants, Loans, & Incentive Programs.

- USDA
 - Rural Business Development Grant (RBDG)
 - Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant Program (REDLG)
 - Farmers Market Promotion Program (FMPP)
 - Value Added Producer Grant (VAPG)
 - Business & Industry Loan Guarantee Program
 - Farm Storage Facility Loan Program

- EDA
 - Economic Adjustment Assistance Program (EAA)
- State
 - Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI) Grant
 - Enrich Colorado Ag Grant Program

Obstacles: One key obstacle often facing food hubs is undercapitalization, which can limit the effectiveness of the organization. Liability concerns are also an issue that arises with food hubs. Some deal with this issue by having producers maintain ownership of the products until they are delivered to an end user. Others obtain insurance policies that are more affordable for the food hub to acquire than it would be for individual producers. Another obstacle is the regulatory environment surrounding food products. A considerable amount of time and effort is required to understand all of the regulations that apply to the products that come through the hub.

Capacity Development: In order to develop a regional food hub, capacity will need to be developed in logistics and route planning, marketing, and food handling and processing.

Regional Food Hub Impact:

Estimated Direct Jobs Created	7
Jobs Multiplier	1.21
Potential Total Jobs Created	8.47



Food Manufacturing

In conjunction with the other agricultural related projects, the addition of new food manufacturing facilities to the County is recommended. Several local businesses are currently involved in food manufacturing and processing. Connecting them with the food hub will provide opportunities for these businesses to grow. Attracting additional food manufacturers to the County is also an important step in improving the local economy. Identifying a potential operator and securing a production facility will help this economic development to occur. This facility could also be closely tied to the food hub and retail center to ensure a strong market for its output. It should take advantage of the abundance of locally grown and raised food products and utilize them as key components of the business.



Partners: Key partnerships in this project would include existing food manufacturers in the County, potential entrants into the market such as Rocky Mountain Dehydrators, and current agricultural producers.

Synergies: Food manufacturing facilities will have strong synergies with agricultural producers, the branding of a sustainable agriculture

center of excellence, the retail venue and food hub. By adding value added products to the County's output, additional revenue will stay in the County, shipping costs can be more easily borne, and the market for local raw materials is expanded.

Funding: Many of the same funding sources that apply to other agricultural related projects apply here. For more detailed descriptions of these programs, please see Appendix A: Available Grants, Loans, & Incentive Programs.

- USDA
 - Rural Business Development Grant (RBDG)
 - Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant Program (REDLG)
 - Value Added Producer Grant (VAPG)
 - Business & Industry Loan Guarantee Program
- EDA
 - Economic Adjustment Assistance Program (EAA)
- HHS
 - Community Economic Development Grants (CED)
- Treasury
 - New Market Tax Credit (NMTC)
- State
 - Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI) Grant
 - Enrich Colorado Ag Grant Program
- Private
 - Organic Valley's Farmers Advocating for Organics (FAFO) fund

Obstacles: Large initial capital costs are a large obstacle for new food manufacturing operations. Innovative funding sources and potential sharing of costs among different operations may provide solutions to this problem.

Capacity Development: Key capacity development areas for this project include the physical production capability and distribution

capabilities. The latter will benefit from the creation of a regional food hub in the County.

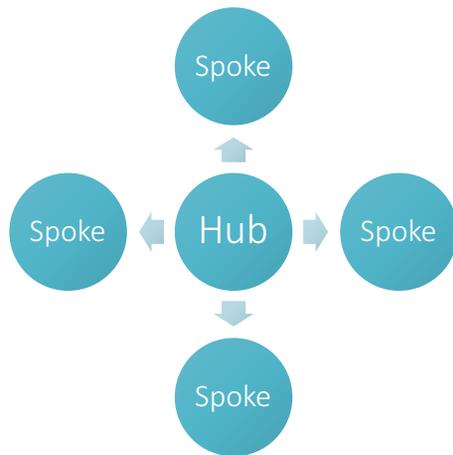
Food Manufacturing Impact:

Estimated Direct Jobs Created	10
Jobs Multiplier	1.32
Potential Total Jobs Created	13.19

Innovation Center

As job growth is primarily driven by small businesses, a strategy designed to attract and retain entrepreneurs should be developed and implemented. An innovation center will assist local economies in growing jobs in start-up and initial stage companies by providing entrepreneurs with access to specialized services and investors that would otherwise not be readily available.

Regional Hub and Spoke: The proposed innovation center in Delta will be part of a regional network of centers that utilize a hub and spoke model.



The hub of the innovation center network will provide centralized services to the network spokes. This hub would sponsor each innovation center, assume ongoing operational risk, and act as a capital network for entrepreneurs and potential investors. The hub would also provide administrative support to the regional centers, assist in identifying and developing each center’s specialty, and work to expand the capital network by adding additional spokes when feasible.

The hub will assist in identifying and recruiting start-up businesses in each spoke’s targeted industry. The sponsoring hub would also coordinate angel investor conventions, network with business incubators and accelerators across the country, and develop relationships with institutions of higher education to facilitate technology transfer and commercialization.

Each spoke will provide local entrepreneurs with a full suite of start-up services by leveraging the sponsoring hub’s expertise in business incubation, job acceleration, administrative functions, and access to capital.

In addition, other spokes in the network will have distinctive areas of expertise that can be leveraged by other spokes in the network, coordinated by the innovation center hub.

The model described herein leverages and builds upon successful innovation center models used throughout the country. The innovation center model was built out of the incubator model, which operates under the philosophy that new businesses and startups have the greatest chance of success if they collaborate, share fixed operating expenses, and pool knowledge and resources. As a result, incubators and co-working spaces have been built across the country that provide a place to work and sometimes specific services to new startups. However, incubator operators have expressed frustration

that they have become glorified landlords for new startup companies that are seeking cheap rent, rather than being the innovation hub that they intended to create.

The most successful incubators are those that provide more than just a space, and are able to connect new businesses to physical, financial, and capital resources that they wouldn't otherwise have access to. In this regard, the proposed innovation center concept takes the incubator model to the next level by specializing in a specific type of service offered to potential startups. Each spoke will have the potential to create momentum and focused attention that an all-things-for-all-people facility would never be able to provide.

Delta Spoke Specialization

With a large agricultural base and growing organic segment, Delta is a suitable location for an innovation center specializing in agricultural technology ("Ag Tech").

This is an area showing tremendous promise as the flow of investor capital to Ag Tech has increased dramatically with approximately \$486 million in equity investments made last year. These include equity placements through specialty funds Paine & Partners and the AgTech Innovation Fund.



Representative start-up companies in the Ag Tech segment include:

- Freight Farms – a firm that builds self contained gardens in reclaimed shipping containers;
- Modern Meadow – a firm that makes animal proteins in a laboratory; and
- Harvest Automation – a firm that makes self guided robots that move nursery potted plants from spot to spot to optimize growing.

Partners: Other innovation centers in the region would be key partners for this project. Additional important partnerships would include Ag tech investment firms, local entrepreneurs, mentors, engineers, machinists, and others.

Synergies: Such a center will have strong synergies with agricultural producers, food manufacturers, the center of excellence, and the retail venue.

Funding: The following funding sources could be used for this project. For more detailed descriptions of these programs, please see Appendix A: Available Grants, Loans, & Incentive Programs.

- USDA
 - Rural Business Development Grant (RBDG)
 - Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant Program (REDLG)
- EDA
 - Economic Adjustment Assistance Program (EAA)
- HHS
 - Community Economic Development Grants (CED)
- HUD
 - Rural Housing and Economic Development Program (RHED)
- State
 - Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI) Grant

Obstacles: The key challenges in instituting a project such as this lies in identifying and amassing the resources local entrepreneurs need. Because each new idea will all require different expertise and tools to become a reality, the center will need to be nimble and able to tap into a resource rich network.

Capacity Development: The key capacity development area for this project is the development of the innovation center hub. Additionally, acquiring prototyping expertise and equipment, developing a network of mentors and practitioners, and tapping into venture capital networks will be vital.

Innovation Center Impact:

Estimated Direct Jobs Created	3 per year
Jobs Multiplier	1.28
Potential Total Jobs Created	3.83 per year

Downtown Redevelopment

In addition to the proposed retail venue, additional downtown redevelopment projects include a national brand select service hotel and a new development that could connect downtown to the river and recreation venues. There are currently limited hotel options in the County and none from the top three hotel loyalty programs, Marriott, Hilton, and IHG.

The development of a new hotel in the County would be able to capture additional market share and provide job opportunities in the County. The land east of Highway 50 near the river and bypass interchange is likely the best location for this development due to its visibility along the highway and access to the river and downtown.



Such a hotel would likely be able to capture some highway travelers that are currently staying in Montrose or Grand Junction, and would benefit from the development of other draws to the County such as the establishment of a center of excellence and local food retail and dining experience. With public assistance, this hotel could also contain a conference center to accommodate the forums, conferences and conventions related to the agriculture cluster in addition to housing other local and regional events.

A new downtown development that connects to the river could attract regional visitation. This area could involve a mix of housing, retail and entertainment that leverages the beauty of the river. It could also connect several small lakes with recreational amenities together. This project can help differentiate the community, create improved quality of life and bring an additional “cool factor” to living in Delta.

Partners: Key partners in a project such as this include landowners, developers, the City, and the County.

Synergies: A national brand select service hotel creates important synergies with several of the other projects proposed here. More visitors will be likely to come to the County and experience its agricultural and recreational opportunities if there are a variety of accommodation options. Additionally, in order to develop a recognized level of expertise in sustainable agriculture, conferences and other meetings will play an important role and can only be accomplished if there are adequate accommodations. Other local retail and restaurant businesses will also benefit from a new hotel and provide benefits to hotel guests.

Funding: Most of the funding for a hotel will need to come from private sources. Some USDA sources can be used to assist as well. For more detailed descriptions of these programs, please see Appendix A: Available Grants, Loans, & Incentive Programs.

- USDA
 - Rural Business Development Grant (RBDG)
 - Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant Program (REDLG)
- HUD
 - Rural Housing and Economic Development Program (RHED)
- State

- Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI) Grant
- City/County
 - Tax Increment
 - Lodging Tax
 - Community Development Block Grant

Obstacles: Hotels in rural locations often do not meet high enough occupancy levels to make them attractive to hotel developers. Although they can turn a profit, they may not provide the same level of return available elsewhere. In such situations, tax incentives and other alternative funding sources can often fill the gap and bring developers to the table.

Capacity Development: The key development that will be needed for this project is the ability to involve the public sector in identifying ways to incentivize a project. The enactment of building codes, maintenance standards, and or zoning regulations will also be a needed development.

Downtown Redevelopment Impact:

Estimated Direct Jobs Created	30
Jobs Multiplier	1.18
Potential Total Jobs Created	35.46

Recreational Assets

In order to increase tourism to the County, a number of recreational assets should be improved and promoted. The Gunnison River flows through the City of Delta, however, it is underutilized as a recreational draw. By carrying out a riverfront restoration, the River will be an asset for those in the community and will be an additional reason for visitors to stop and explore. Establishing a blue ribbon fishery, exploring kayaking opportunities and other river activities,



and building trails and walkways making the river accessible will greatly enhance its impact on the Community.



The County also has a number of small lakes that could be tapped for recreation potential. Cable parks allow wakeboarding and waterskiing on small bodies of water without the need for a boat. Such a venue is relatively inexpensive and could provide a unique draw for the community. Wakeboarding and waterskiing competitions could be held bringing more people into the County.



The County also has some potential for attracting mountain bikers to the County. It is located between two mountain biking destinations in Fruita and Crested Butte, and could entice mountain bikers to make a stop in the County while traveling between these major destinations. Those venues, while seeing great success with

mountain biking tourism, do not seem to be sharing tourism but rather are discrete destinations. If Delta County can develop impressive mountain bike terrain it could serve as a bridge to get tourists from one biking community to another. Multi-day tours and excursions could be planned with Delta as a new stop. The sidewinder trail in Gunnison Gulch is the most popular trail in the area, and efforts to enhance the trail and promote it could increase visitation to the County. There are other potential mountain biking areas that could be developed into a venue that would create a diverse experience from Fruita and Crested Butte, which will be necessary to have legitimacy and pull mountain bikers to the area.

Partners: Major partners in this effort include the BLM who manages the Gunnison Gulch area, the Colorado Department of Natural Resources, community groups, property owners, Delta City and County.

Synergies: The synergies this project develops will primarily relate to tourism, providing additional draws for local hotels, and will benefit retail shops and restaurants as people find a reason to stop in the County.

Funding: There are a number of funding sources for recreation and watershed restoration projects including those listed below. For more detailed descriptions of these programs, please see Appendix A: Available Grants, Loans, & Incentive Programs.

- EPA
 - Five Star Restoration Program
 - Targeted Watershed Grant
 - Regional Grant
- USDA
 - Rural Business Development Grant (RBDG)
 - Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant Program (REDLG)

- State
 - Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI) Grant (DOLA)
 - Colorado Watershed Restoration Grant (DNR)
 - Fishing is Fun Grant (CPW)
 - Non-Motorized Trails Grant Program (CPW)

Obstacles: The major obstacle in deriving economic benefit from projects such as this is marketing the project to potential visitors. Public relations efforts are the most successful means to generate interest in the area. In order for the project to succeed, significant effort will need to be made to spread the word through a variety of different outlets.

Capacity Development: The County needs to attract retail outfitting, rental, and guiding businesses to provide the goods and services recreational visitors are looking for.

Recreational Venue Impact:

Estimated Direct Jobs Created	3
Jobs Multiplier	1.06
Potential Total Jobs Created	3.18

Agriculture Laborer Housing

One issue that has been raised by a number of farmers is the difficulty of finding seasonal labor.

Lack of suitable housing has been identified as a significant impediment in this regard. This is a nationwide issue, and there are some programs in place to address the issue. Efforts to improve and expand agriculture laborer housing in the County will be a significant benefit to the local agriculture industry and economy as a whole.





Partners: A key partner in this effort will be the Delta Workforce Center, which operates under the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment. They are best positioned to identify the scope of the seasonal labor housing demand and provide assistance navigating the regulations associated with labor housing.

Synergies: Apart from direct benefits to the agriculture industry, the synergies this project generates will likely be tertiary, stemming from these overall improvements in the agriculture industry.

Funding: There are a few funding opportunities for projects such as this, however competition is strong due to high demand and limited funds. For more detailed descriptions of these programs, please see Appendix A: Available Grants, Loans, & Incentive Programs.

- USDA
 - Farm Labor Housing Program
- HUD
 - Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)
 - Many additional programs to fund housing projects
- Private/Non-Profit
 - National Rural Housing Coalition
 - Colorado Resources & Housing Development Corporation

Farm Labor Housing Impact:

Estimated Direct Jobs Created	5
Jobs Multiplier	1.37
Potential Total Jobs Created	6.85

Action Plan

Sustainable Agriculture Center of Excellence				
Highest Priority = ★★★★★★ Lowest Priority = ☆☆☆☆☆☆				
Project	Action Item	Priority	Cost Estimate	Funding
Sustainable Agriculture Center of Excellence	Engage key stakeholders. Form committee that will bring together major stakeholders and oversee initiatives of marketing, planning, organization, and financing.	★★★★★★	Time	N/A
Sustainable Agriculture Center of Excellence	Production- Identify key metric that can be used to validate claims of sustainable expertise and develop plan to reach metric.	★★★★★★	Time	N/A
Sustainable Agriculture Center of Excellence, Food Hub	Hire or identify individual to be responsible for public relations. Should be responsible for food hub marketing as well.	☆★★★★★	\$40,000-\$65,000 per year	Food Hub Operating Budget; Organic Valley's Farmers Advocating for Organics (FAFO) fund; Farmers Market Promotion Program (FMPP)
Sustainable Agriculture Center of Excellence	Partner with academic institutions to develop sustainable agriculture projects in the area that enhance local expertise.	☆★★★★★	Varied	ED Budget; Enrich Colorado Ag Grant Program; Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education program (SARE); Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI): Global Food Security
Sustainable Agriculture Center of Excellence	Assist producers obtain USDA certifications and/or take other necessary steps to achieve metric identified above.	☆☆★★★	\$5,000	Specialty Crop Block Grant Program (SCBGP); Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program (BFRDP); VOGA Operating Budget; ED Budget

Sustainable Agriculture Center of Excellence	Expand soil health conference to wider audience. Identify opportunities to include add on meetings or seminars focused on sustainable agriculture.	☆☆★★★	Varied	Enrollment Fees; Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)
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Signature Venue				
Highest Priority = ★★★★★★ Lowest Priority = ☆☆☆☆☆				
Project	Action Item	Priority	Cost Estimate	Funding
Signature Venue, Food Hub	Conduct feasibility study to determine expected demand.	★★★★★★	\$20,000-\$40,000	ED Budget; RBDG
Signature Venue, Flagged Hotel	Work with City officials to develop zoning and building standards in order to be able to attract development.	★★★★★★	\$5,000	ED Budgets; Planning Budgets
Signature Venue	Recruit developer. Form Public-Private Partnership between major stakeholders to align interests and combine resources.	☆☆★★★	\$25,000	FMPP, ED Budget, TIF
Signature Venue, Flagged Hotel	Investigate potential creation of Urban Renewal Authority	☆☆★★★	Time	N/A
Signature Venue	Identify site and begin assemblage of land using option contracts for venue.	☆☆★★★	\$2,500-\$10,000	RDBG; PPP
Signature Venue	Determine financing gap and secure funding sources to begin development of venue.	☆☆☆☆★	\$250,000-\$500,000	CED; REDLG, NMTC, REDI Grant, EAA, PPP
Signature Venue	Complete infrastructure needed to make site shovel ready for new development and construction of facilities.	☆☆☆☆★	TBD	Public Works Grant, RHED, CDBG, PPP

Food Hub				
Highest Priority = ★★★★★★ Lowest Priority = ☆☆☆☆☆				
Project	Action Item	Priority	Cost Estimate	Funding
Food Hub	Engage stakeholders defining their interests and areas of expertise.	★★★★★★	Time	N/A
Food Hub	Develop a strategic plan with clear goals and vision	★★★★★★	Time	N/A
Food Hub	Identify management or oversight team that has skills and proven experience in financial management, the regulatory environment, marketing and packaging, inventory management and quality control, and that can engage meaningfully with farmer/business owners.	☆★★★★★	\$50,000-\$75,000 per year	Food Hub Operating Budget; Farmers Market Promotion Program (FMPP)
Food Hub, Signature Venue	Conduct feasibility study to determine market area and expected demand.	☆★★★★★	\$20,000-\$40,000	ED Budget; RBDG
Food Hub	Develop distribution strategy including how transportation will occur, how products can be priced to cover those costs, and backhauling opportunities.	☆★★★★★	Time	N/A
Food Hub	Select business structure that helps stakeholders meet their goals for financial, marketing and production planning and growth. The management team should identify the point at which a particular business structure constrains further investment.	☆★★★★★	\$1,000-\$5,000	Food Hub Operating Budget
Food Hub	Develop common practice standards for participating producers including good agricultural practices, quality control, packaging, and delivery.	☆☆★★★★	\$5,000	Food Hub Operating Budget; Specialty Crop Block Grant Program (SCBGP); Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program (BFRDP)
Food Hub	Investigate securing affordable product liability insurance for individual vendors, or umbrella insurance coverage for vendors that can be purchased through the hub, since this is critical for hubs accessing institutional markets, such as schools or hotels.	☆☆★★★★	\$10,000-\$35,000 per year	Risk Management Education and Outreach Partnership Cooperative Agreements Program; Food Hub Operating Budget

Food Hub	Identify all sources of technical and financial support including businesses with technical expertise in processing, distribution, or transportation with which a hub could contract to more efficiently execute some of the more complex or cost-prohibitive functions.	☆☆★★★	\$15,000	ED Budget, State Incentives, County and City Officials' time
Food Hub	Identify potential sites for warehouse/distribution center.	☆☆★★★	Time	N/A
Food Hub	Begin assemblage of land using option contracts for warehouse/distribution center.	☆☆☆☆★	\$2,500-\$10,000	RDBG; Food Hub Operating Budget
Food Hub	Provide capital for supply chain infrastructure, such as land, vehicles and storage facilities, technical infrastructure including billing protocols, Internet management systems and payment processes. Donated or shared equipment and facilities can substantially reduce the capital required to start and operate the food hub.	☆☆☆☆★	\$250,000-\$750,000	Food Hub Owners/Members; RBDG; REDLG; Business & Industry Loan Guarantee Program; Farm Storage Facility Loan Program; EAA; REDI Grant
Food Hub	Develop strategy to efficiently managing information flow between producers, the food hub, and consumers or wholesalers	☆☆☆☆★	\$15,000	ED Budget, State Incentives, County and City Officials' time

Food Manufacturing				
Highest Priority = ★★★★★★ Lowest Priority = ☆☆☆☆☆				
Project	Action Item	Priority	Cost Estimate	Funding
Food Manufacturing	Identify and recruit private sector partner to manage and operate food-manufacturing facility.	★★★★★★	TBD	Incentives
Food Manufacturing	Conduct feasibility study to determine market demand.	☆☆★★★★	\$10,000-\$25,000	VAPG; RBDG; ED Budget
Food Manufacturing	Coordinate efforts with Food Hub to identify areas of synergy in distribution and marketing.	☆☆★★★★	Time	N/A

Food Manufacturing	Identify site and begin assemblage of land using option contracts for venue or explore leasing options.	☆☆★★★	\$2,500-\$10,000	RDBG; PPP
Food Manufacturing	Determine financing gap and secure funding sources to begin development of venue and purchase equipment.	☆☆☆☆★	TBD	VAPG, RBDG CED; REDLG, NMTC, REDI Grant, EAA, PPP

Ag Tech Innovation Center				
Highest Priority = ★★★★★★ Lowest Priority = ☆☆☆☆☆☆				
Project	Action Item	Priority	Cost Estimate	Funding
Innovation Center	Identify, recruit, and partner with a sponsoring Colorado-based for-profit entity that would be the hub in the regional innovation center hub and spoke model	★★★★★★	\$5,000	ED Budgets
Innovation Center	Determine the needs of entrepreneurs in the Ag Tech segment and develop offerings at the innovation center that meet those needs. Where needs can not be met locally, identify other spokes that can supplement the Delta spoke offerings to meet those entrepreneurial needs;	☆☆★★★★	\$5,000 to \$10,000	RBDG; ED Budget
Innovation Center	Determine facility, human capital, and IT needs and develop a capital budget for a virtual and physical innovation center spoke;	☆☆★★★★	\$5,000 to \$10,000	RBDG; ED Budget
Innovation Center	Identify potential sites for innovation center	☆☆★★★★	Time	N/A
Innovation Center	Identify funding gaps and secure financing sources that will enable the sponsoring hub to assume operational risk	☆☆★★★★	Time	N/A
Innovation Center	Begin assemblage of land using option contracts for innovation center or investigate leasing options.	☆☆★★★★	\$2,500-\$10,000	RDBG; Innovation Center Operating Budget
Innovation Center	Network, collaborate, and partner with investors in the Ag Tech segment including those specialty funds highlighted above	☆☆★★★★	Time	N/A

Innovation Center	Develop an incentive package and targeted recruiting message to entrepreneurs in the Ag Tech segment including those businesses mentioned above	☆☆☆☆★	Time	N/A
Innovation Center	Once the center is stabilized, coordinate with the innovation center hub in identifying opportunities for expansion into other technology related industry segments	☆☆☆☆★	Time	N/A

Downtown Redevelopment				
Highest Priority = ★★★★★★ Lowest Priority = ☆☆☆☆☆☆				
Project	Action Item	Priority	Cost Estimate	Funding
Flagged Hotel	Solicit hotel feasibility study. Identify potential sites for hotel development.	★★★★★★	\$15,000	ED Budgets, RBDG
Flagged Hotel, Signature Venue	Work with City officials to develop zoning and building standards in order to be able to attract development.	★★★★★★	\$5,000	ED Budgets; Planning Budgets
Flagged Hotel	Recruit developer/operators for hotel. Form Public-Private Partnership between major stakeholders to align interests and combine resources.	☆☆★★★★	\$25,000	ED Budget, TIF
Flagged Hotel, Signature Venue	Investigate creation of Urban Renewal Authority	☆☆★★★★	Time	N/A
Flagged Hotel	Begin assemblage of land using option contracts for hotel development.	☆☆★★★★	\$2,500-\$10,000	RDBG; PPP
Flagged Hotel	Purchase land that was controlled using option contracts to develop hotel.	☆☆☆☆★★	Market Price	PPP, CIB
Flagged Hotel	Complete infrastructure needed to make hotel area land shovel ready for new development and construction of facilities.	☆☆☆☆★★	TBD	RHED, CDBG, PPP

Recreation Venues				
Highest Priority = ★★★★★★ Lowest Priority = ☆☆☆☆☆☆				
Project	Action Item	Priority	Cost Estimate	Funding
Riverfront Restoration	Form riverfront restoration committee that will bring together major stakeholders and oversee initiatives of planning, organization, and financing.	★★★★★★	Time	N/A
Riverfront Restoration	Develop strategic plan for riverfront area and identify funding needs	☆★★★★★	Time	N/A
Riverfront Restoration	Secure funding for riverfront restoration.	☆☆★★★★	TBD	EPA Five Star Restoration Program; EPA Targeted Watershed Grant; EPA Regional Grant; Colorado Watershed Restoration Grant; Fishing is Fun Grant
Mountain Bike Trails	Identify potential sites for outdoor recreation venues. Work with BLM to improve trails.	☆★★★★★	\$5,000-\$10,000	Non-Motorized Trails Grant Program
Lake recreation	Conduct feasibility study to determine market demand for cable park or other recreational venue	☆★★★★★	\$5,000-\$15,000	ED Budget; RBDG
Lake recreation	Form partnership with landowners to develop lake recreational venue	☆☆★★★★		PPP
Events	Engage events committee that will oversee initiatives of marketing, planning, organization, and financing of County events.	☆☆☆☆★★		County and City Officials' time

Laborer Housing				
Highest Priority = ★★★★★★ Lowest Priority = ☆☆☆☆☆☆				
Project	Action Item	Priority	Cost Estimate	Funding
Housing	Coordinate with Workforce Services and conduct study to determine current and future housing needs.	★★★★★★	\$25,000	Farm Labor Housing Program; CDBG; National Rural Housing Coalition; Colorado Resources & Housing Development Corporation; ED Budget
Housing	Work with local farmers and landowners to identify potential sites for development.	☆★★★★★	Time	N/A
Housing	Recruit residential developer.	☆☆★★★★	Time	N/A
Housing	Secure financing for housing development	☆☆☆★★★	TBD	Farm Labor Housing Program; CDBG; National Rural Housing Coalition; Colorado Resources & Housing Development Corporation; Private Sector

Funding

Recommendations

There are many Federal and State programs available to the County that can be used to incentivize private investment and enhance workforce skills. For an extensive list of these programs, please see Appendix A: Available Grants, Loans, & Incentive Programs. A systematic approach should be used to identify and target priority programs, develop adequate grant writing capabilities, form strategic partnerships with local businesses and institutions of higher

education to meet program requirements, and leverage County and local resources.

Specific recommendations include:

- Pursue annual funding requests from EDA and USDA programs. Many USDA and EDA programs begin accepting applications and have funding available beginning on October 1st of each fiscal year.
- Secure funding from USDA’s Housing and Community Programs and REDLG program.



- Continually update a schedule of grant application due dates, funding availability, and grant writing lead times to create a manageable system for meeting application deadlines and maximizing access to funding under available programs.
- Focus on creating a robust revolving loan fund by combining revolving funds that are available through various programs including the USDA, CDBG, SEUALG, and GOED. Identify eligible projects to secure funding.
- Target redevelopment in areas that qualify for New Market Tax Credits and Enterprise Zones. Evaluate the expansion of the current Enterprise Zones.
- Develop strategic partnerships with existing institutions to enhance private investment for future projects and businesses. These include the Colorado Housing and Finance Authority (CHFA), EB-5 Regional Centers, regional Small Business Investment Companies, Community Development Entities, State Small Business Credit Initiative, and Community Development Financial Institutions.
- Work with residential developers and non-profits on programs available through HUD / FHA and the USDA.
- Provide information to prospective businesses regarding available incentive programs. Include information and links to Federal, State, and local incentive programs on marketing collateral and Delta County website.
- Educate local businesses, institutions of higher education, and County residents on available programs and incentives.
- Provide information to prospective businesses regarding available incentive programs. Include information and links to Federal, State, and local incentive programs on marketing collateral and Delta County website.
- Educate local businesses, institutions of higher education, and County residents on available programs and incentives.

Areas of Divesture

In addition to prioritizing investments in these projects, the scope of this report also includes an assessment of current projects the County is funding to determine if there are better uses for the County's limited resources.

The area of divesture for that would provide the greatest return is the truck bypass. The bypass provides benefits for the City of Delta in reducing congestion and traffic noise; however, the funds required to service the debt on the project are a significant limitation in pursuing economic development projects that will have a greater return in terms of number of jobs, output, and revenue.

As the road has been constructed and the County is liable for the investment, divesting from the project will require identifying alternative funding sources for the outstanding debt. The most likely source for such funds is the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) since road projects along state highways typically fall into their purview. It is recommended that conversations begin with CDOT to identify potential grants or other financing sources to begin divesting from this project.

Conclusion

The projects listed above provide opportunities to enhance economic prosperity and add high wage jobs in the face of recent economic decline due mining job losses. They stem from a strategy focused on differentiated export oriented businesses, fostering entrepreneurship, developing community assets to make Delta a place where people want to visit, work, and live.

The projects are centered around the County's agricultural core, both supporting conventional agriculture and capitalizing on the high

growth sector of organic agriculture. By marketing the County as a center of excellence for sustainable agriculture, demand for agricultural products out of the area will increase, and a number of synergies can be created in tourism, manufacturing, and retail industries.

These projects will require investments of time and in many cases capital by the public sector in partnership with private sector entities. Significant effort will be required to bring them to pass, but successfully implementing them will greatly enhance the County's economic prosperity. Combined these projects could contribute over 90 jobs to the local economy. As the projects take root and a virtuous cycle of investment begins to occur, this number will continue to grow.

Appendix A: Available Grants, Loans, & Incentive Programs

Federal Programs

Eligibility

Most of Delta County (the “County”) is currently eligible for federal programs designed to assist economically distressed communities and the entire County is eligible for other programs that are rural community specific. In addition, there are other programs that do not require economic distress criteria and are generally available to all communities.

Economically distressed criteria include unemployment, lower-than-average household income, and recent job losses. Funding applications for programs that are specific to rural communities, defined as areas with a population below a certain threshold, are reviewed using a series of scoring criteria, which allows communities experiencing economic distress to receive higher scores. The higher the score the more competitive an application becomes and the greater likelihood that the application will be approved.

Funding availability under each program is subject to change. The County should inquire with the specific Federal entity regarding the availability of funding prior to completing a funding application.

Sources

The primary sources of Federal funding available to the County include the following:

- Department of Commerce’s Economic Development Agency (EDA)
- Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development
- Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Program
- Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
- Department of Homeland Security (DHS)
- Department of Labor (DOL)
- Department of Energy (DOE)
- Department of the Treasury
- Small Business Administration (SBA)
- Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)

Uses

These programs are available for a variety of uses including economic development studies, planning, infrastructure investments, research, housing development, the redevelopment of blighted areas, financing, and credit enhancements. A brief overview of programs available under these sources is listed below.

EDA

The County is eligible for four programs with the EDA:

EDA Programs: Delta County Eligible

Program	Description
Public Works Economic Development	This program supports the construction or rehabilitation of essential public infrastructure and facilities to help communities and regions leverage their resources and strengths to create jobs, drive innovation, become centers of competition in the global economy, and ensure resilient economies.
Economic Adjustment Assistance	This program can be used for construction and non-construction assistance (including public works, technical assistance, economic recovery strategies, and revolving loan fund (RLF) projects) in regions experiencing severe economic dislocations that may occur suddenly or over time.
Short Term Planning	This program provides assistance to eligible recipients to create regional economic development plans in order to stimulate and guide the economic development efforts of a community.
Local Technical Assistance	This program helps eligible recipients fill the knowledge and information gaps that may prevent leaders in the public and nonprofit sectors in economically distressed regions from making optimal decisions on local economic development.

USDA

There are three USDA programming sources that are available to the County: Business Programs, Housing Programs, and Community Programs. The County is eligible for each program offered under the Business and Housing programming sources and some of the programs offered under the Community programming source.

USDA Business Programs

These programs are available to municipalities with a population of less than fifty thousand, except for the IRP, which has a population limit of twenty-five thousand. There are eight separate programs under USDA Business Programs:

USDA Business Programs

Program	Description
Intermediary Relending Program (IRP)	An intermediary makes direct loans to businesses from its revolving loan fund. The intermediary pays one percent for thirty years. Loans can be used for community development projects, the establishment or expansion of businesses, and the creation or saving of rural jobs.
Rural Economic Development Loans and Grants (REDLG)	The intermediary, electric or telephone cooperatives makes direct loans or grants to profit or non-profit business and public bodies for rural economic development and job creation projects. Loans are up to one million dollars at zero percent interest with a term of ten years. The grant is up to three hundred thousand dollars and must be used on a community facility. If the grant is repaid it can be used as a revolver to fund additional projects within the community.
Rural Micro-entrepreneur Assistance Program (RMAP)	This program provides training, technical assistance or small loans to new and existing rural small businesses.
Business and Industry Loan Guarantees (B&I)	Businesses can apply for a guaranteed loan through federal or state-chartered banks, credit unions, or savings & loan associations. Loans can be provided for most business purposes except production agriculture. Loan proceeds can be used for the acquisition, start-up and expansion of businesses that create rural employment.
Renewable Energy	This program pays up to 25% of project costs

and Efficiency Grants (REAP)	including wind, solar, biomass, geothermal, or other renewable energy sources. It also can be used to make energy efficiency improvements.
Value-Added Producer Grants (VAPG)	Agricultural producers and producer organizations can use this program to conduct feasibility analyses, develop business and marketing plans, and conduct other types of studies to help establish a viable value-added business venture. This program can also be used to establish working capital accounts.

USDA Housing Programs

Municipalities with a population of less than twenty thousand are eligible for these programs. There are seven separate programs under the USDA Housing Programs, four of which are for individuals and families, and the remaining three for public bodies, non-profits, for profits, and other entities.

USDA Housing: For Individuals and Families

Program	Description
Single Family Home Ownership Guaranteed Loans	Through a private lender, eligible homebuyer applicants can receive a loan guarantee up to 100% of market value.
Single Family Home Ownership Loans	A direct loan program through the USDA Rural Development office to provide loans up to 100% of market value, amortized over 33 years.
Single Family Home Repair Loans and Grants	Provides very low-income applicants with loans and grants to make essential repairs and remove health and safety hazards. Loan terms of up to 20 years at 1%, up to \$20,000. Maximum grant is \$7,500.
Mutual Self-Help Housing Grants	Designed to assist applicants with building homes as a group with construction guidance from non-profit organizations. Loans are provided for site, material, and skilled labor. Applicants receive a direct loan while the non-profit housing organization receives a grant to hire a supervisor and pay other administrative expenses.

USDA Housing: For Public Bodies, Non-Profits, and For-Profits, and Other Entities

Program	Description
Housing Preservation	A two-year grant term to repair and rehabilitate single-family housing or rental properties.
Rental Housing for Families and Elderly Direct Loans and Loan Guarantees	A direct loan or loan guarantee program for the new construction or substantial renovation of rental housing.
Farm Labor Housing	To provide farm, farm organizations and corporation, non-profits, Tribes, and public agencies with direct loans and grants for the new construction or substantial rehabilitation of farm labor housing.

Community Programs

The County is eligible for four separate programs under USDA Community Programs:

USDA Housing: For Public Bodies, Non-Profits, and For-Profits, and Other Entities

Program	Description
Rural Broadband Loan and Loan Guarantee	A grant, direct loan, or loan guarantee for the construction, acquisition and improvement of broadband transmission facilities and equipment, and land and buildings used in providing broadband service. Eligible applicants are legally organized entities providing or proposing to provide broadband service in eligible rural communities.
Electric and Telecommunication	A direct loan or loan guarantee for generation, bulk transmission facilities, and distribution of electric power. Loans and loan guarantees are

	also available to enhance 911 emergency service, digital switching equipment, and fiber-optic cable, along with traditional main system telecommunications service. Eligible applicants are non-profit and cooperative associations, public bodies, and other utilities.
Distance Learning and Telemedicine	A grant to fund telecommunications-enabled information, audio and video equipment, and related technologies to encourage and improve telemedicine and distance learning services in rural areas. Eligible applicants are incorporated organizations or partnerships, libraries, public bodies, and tribes or tribal organizations.
Community Facilities Program	A direct loan, loan guarantee, or grant to build facilities, buy essential equipment, public safety, schools, libraries, and hospitals. Eligible applicants are public bodies and non-profit groups.

USDA Agricultural Programs

These programs are available to agricultural producers, non-profits and local governments to support agricultural activities. The following programs fall under the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service:

USDA Agricultural Programs

Program	Description
Specialty Crop Block Grant Program (SCBGP)	A grant administered by state departments of agriculture that enhances the competitiveness of specialty crops (fruits, vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, horticulture, nursery crops, and floriculture), including locally grown and consumed specialty crops. Funds can be used for research and feasibility studies, business planning, marketing and promotion, and training and technical assistance.
Sustainable	A grant intended to advance sustainable innovations

Agriculture Research and Education (SARE)	in American agriculture. Supports research and feasibility studies apart from business planning, training, and technical assistance on topics such as on-farm renewable energy, pest and weed management, sustainable communities, agro-forestry, marketing, and more.
Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program (BFRDP)	A grant or costs associated with education, training, outreach, and mentoring beginning farmers and ranchers, as long as the costs are normally allowable and reasonable. May be used for acquisition of non-fixed equipment for use on the project, including high tunnels.
Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)	A grant that provides financial and technical assistance for planning and implementing conservation practices that address threats to soil, water, air, and other natural resources on farm and ranch lands.
Farmers Market Promotion Program (FMPP)	Grant program designed to facilitate and promote farmers markets and other direct-to-consumer market channels for agricultural products. Funds can be used for research and feasibility studies, business planning, equipment purchase, and training and technical assistance.
Federal-State Marketing Improvement Program (FSMIP)	Provides matching funds to States to explore barriers, challenges, and opportunities in marketing, transporting, and distributing food and agricultural products. Funds can be used for research and feasibility studies, business planning, marketing and promotion, equipment rental, building or room rental, and training and technical assistance.
Community Food Projects Competitive Grant Program (CFP)	Designed to increase food security in low-income communities by developing linkages between sectors of the food system, supporting the development of entrepreneurial projects, and encouraging communities' long-term planning.

	Funds can be used for research and feasibility studies, business planning, construction, working capital, and marketing and promotion.
Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI): Global Food Security	AFRI has seven “challenge” areas; one program area relevant to food hubs is “Sustainable Food Systems to Reduce Hunger and Food Insecurity.” This program supports integrated research, education, and extension projects that increase food security by having access to improved sustainable local and regional food systems. Projects could include components such as, sustainable food production, processing, distribution, marketing, addressing policy and consumer issues, healthy food choices, farmer prosperity, and natural resource issues, such as increased biodiversity, clean water, and healthy soils. Funds are available to universities and can be used for research, education, and extension integrated projects, conference, and strengthening grants.
Farm Storage Facility Loan Program	This program provides low-interest financing for producers to build or upgrade on-farm storage and handling facilities. Finances the purchase, construction, or refurbishment of farm storage facilities including on-site storage, cooling, cribs, bins, safety equipment, and cooling and monitoring devices, including off-farm labor and materials. Funds can be used for research and feasibility studies, business planning (attorney or archeological fees permitted), construction, and equipment purchase.
Risk Management Education and Outreach Partnership Cooperative Agreements Program	Funds risk management strategies related to production (including crop insurance), marketing, legal, human, and financial issues.

Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Program

The Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) program is a highly competitive program that encourages domestic small businesses to engage in Federal Research/Research and Development (R/R&D) that has the potential for commercialization. Eleven federal agencies participate in this program, each administering its own awards.

Eligible Applicants: Qualified small businesses can participate in the SBIR program.

Program Description: The SBIR program stimulates technological innovation in the private sector by strengthening the role of small business concerns in meeting Federal research and development needs, increasing the commercial application of federally supported research results, and fostering and encouraging participation by socially and economically disadvantaged and women-owned small businesses. The program is structured in three phases to take a project from R&D to commercialization.

Deadline: Varies by agency and award

HUD and FHA

HUD & FHA: Programs for Delta County

Program	Description
State Administered CDBG	Also known as the Small Cities CDBG program, States award grants to smaller units of general local government that carry out community development activities. Region 10 administers CDBG funds for Delta County. Annually, each State develops funding priorities and criteria for selecting projects. The County is considered a non-entitlement community under the CDBG program.
CDBG Section 108 Loan Guarantee	Provided that the State of Colorado agrees to pledge CDBG funds necessary to secure a Section 108 loan,

Program	Delta County as a non-entitlement community may apply for a loan. Applicants may receive a loan guarantee directly or designate another public entity, such as an industrial development authority, to carry out their Section 108 assisted project.
HOME Investment Partnership Program	HOME is the largest Federal block grant to State and local governments designed exclusively to create affordable housing for low-income households. HOME funds are often used to fill the financing gap of projects using Low-Income Housing Tax Credits. Local jurisdictions, such as the County, may be eligible for this program.
Choice Neighborhoods	Choice Neighborhoods grants primarily fund the transformation of severely distressed public and/or HUD-assisted housing developments through rehabilitation, demolition, and new construction. The County may be eligible depending on the number of public and /or HUD-assisted housing development within the County.

HUD & FHA: Programs for Individuals

Program	Description
Section 3	Provides job training and other assistance to very-low and low-income individuals.
203k Rehabilitation Mortgage Insurance	The Section 203(k) program is HUD's primary program for the rehabilitation and repair of single-family properties. As such, it is an important tool for community and neighborhood revitalization and for expanding homeownership opportunities. Applicants can be single-family homeowners and non-profits.

HUD & FHA: Programs for Non-Profits

Program	Description
Self-help	SHOP awards grant funds to eligible national and

Homeownership Opportunity Program (SHOP)	regional non-profit organizations and consortia to purchase home sites and develop or improve the infrastructure needed to set the stage for sweat equity and volunteer-based homeownership programs for low-income persons and families. These grantees include Habitat for Humanity and the Housing Assistance Council, which provide services nationwide.
Federal Home Loan Bank Challenge Grants	Grantees include non-profits that administer the program with affiliate organizations.
203k Rehabilitation Mortgage Insurance	The Section 203(k) program is HUD's primary program for the rehabilitation and repair of single-family properties. As such, it is an important tool for community and neighborhood revitalization and for expanding homeownership opportunities. Applicants can be single-family homeowners and non-profits.

HUD & FHA: For Developers

Program	Description
FHA Loan	Through lenders, this program provides loan guarantees for multi-family housing unit developers to reduce the financing costs and equity required to construct multi-family properties and to provide affordable housing.

Department of Homeland Security

US Citizen and Immigration Services - EB-5 Immigrant Visa

As a rural community, the County is eligible for the EB-5 program. The EB-5 program provides accredited foreign investors with an opportunity to start on the path towards US citizenship by investing in small business enterprises that create jobs in the US. Much of Delta County is defined as a Targeted Employment Area (TEA) and

the minimum qualifying investment in a TEA is \$0.5 million. The investment must result in the creation of ten jobs. There are ten regional centers in the State of Colorado that coordinate investments for EB-5 investors:

1. Civitas Denver Regional Center, LLC
2. CMB Colorado Regional Center, LLC
3. Colorado Growth Fund, LLC
4. Colorado Regional Center, LLC
5. EB5 Affiliate Network State of Colorado Regional Center, LLC
6. Encore Colorado RC, LLC
7. Front Range Regional Center, Inc.
8. InvestAmerica EB-5
9. Live in America - Colorado Regional Center LLC
10. Rocky Mountain High Regional Center

Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) – Federal Insurance and Mitigation (FIMA)

There are three programs under FIMA that may provide mitigation funding for projects located in and around the County’s floodway. These include the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM), and the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP).

Department of Labor

Employment and Training Administration (ETA) - Pay for Success

Under the Pay for Success program, a government agency commits funds as the financial funding agency to pay for specific target outcomes that are achieved within a given timeframe. A key feature of the Pay for Success concept is that the financial capital to cover the total operating costs of achieving the target outcome is provided by independent private, philanthropic, or other social investors for the entire period of performance of the project. The investors’ motivation for accepting the risks of funding the project is an

expectation of a return on their investment. Payment of the committed funds by the government agency is contingent on achievement of results. Depending on the payment criteria and outcomes used, the investor may achieve a positive return in addition to repayment of the principal investment.

Employment and Training Administration (ETA) – Work Opportunity Tax Credit

The Work Opportunity Tax Credit is a Federal tax credit incentive that Congress provides to employers for hiring individuals from certain target groups who have consistently faced significant barriers to employment.

Department of Energy

Loan Guarantees

The Department of Energy offers loan guarantees to eligible companies using innovative green technology. Although not specifically available to the County, this loan guarantee program may be available to eligible companies within the County.

Department of the Treasury

Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) Fund

The CDFI Fund was created for the purpose of promoting economic revitalization and community development through investment in and assistance to CDFI’s. Through monetary awards and the allocation of tax credits, the CDFI Fund helps promote access to capital and local economic growth in urban and rural low-income communities across the nation.

Through its various programs, the CDFI Fund enables locally based organizations to further goals such as: economic development (job creation, business development, and commercial real estate

development); affordable housing (housing development and homeownership); and community development financial services (provision of basic banking services to underserved communities and financial literacy training).

The CDFI Fund accomplishes this through the following programs:

Bank Enterprise Award (BEA) Program

The BEA Program complements the community development activities of insured depository institutions (i.e., banks and thrifts) by providing financial incentives to expand investments in CDFIs and to increase lending, investment, and service activities within economically distressed communities. Providing monetary awards for increasing community development activities leverages CDFI Fund dollars and puts more capital to work in distressed communities throughout the nation.

Capital Magnet Fund (CMF) Program

CMF awards can be used to finance affordable housing activities as well as related economic development activities and community service facilities. Awardees will be able to utilize financing tools such as loan loss reserves, loan funds, risk-sharing loans, and loan guarantees to produce eligible activities whose aggregate costs are at least ten times the size of the award amount.

Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI) Program

The purpose of the CDFI Program is to use federal resources to invest in CDFIs and to build their capacity to serve low-income people and communities that lack access to affordable financial products and services. Through the CDFI Program, the CDFI Fund provides two types of monetary awards to CDFIs - Financial Assistance awards and Technical Assistance awards.

Financial Assistance (FA) Awards: The CDFI Fund makes awards of up to \$2 million to certified CDFIs under the FA component of the CDFI Program. A CDFI may use the award for financing capital, loan loss reserves, capital reserves, or operations. FA awards are made in the form of equity investments, loans, deposits, or grants, and the CDFI is required to match its FA award dollar-for-dollar with non-federal funds of the same type as the award itself. This requirement enables CDFIs to leverage private capital to meet the demand for affordable financial products and services in economically distressed communities.

Technical Assistance (TA) Awards: TA grants allow certified CDFIs and established entities seeking to become certified to build their capacity to provide affordable financial products and services to low-income communities and families. Grants may be used for a wide range of purposes. For example, awardees can use TA funds to purchase equipment, materials, or supplies; for consulting or contracting services; to pay the salaries and benefits of certain personnel; and/or to train staff or board members. The CDFI Fund makes awards of up to \$100,000 under the TA component of the CDFI Program.

Financial Education and Counseling (FEC) Program

Through the FEC Pilot Program, the CDFI Fund provides grants to eligible organizations to enable them to provide a range of financial education and counseling services to prospective homebuyers.

New Markets Tax Credit (NMTC) Program

The NMTC Program provides tax credit incentives to investors for equity investments in certified Community Development Entities, which invest in low-income communities. The credit equals 39% of the investment paid out (5% in each of the first three years, then 6%

in the final four years, for a total of 39%) over seven years (more accurately, six years and one day of the seventh year).

The latest Notice of Allocation Availability (NOAA), made available \$5 billion of NTMC investment authority, with no more than \$100 million in tax credit investment authority available to any one organization.

An organization wishing to receive awards (an “Allocatee”) under the NMTM Program must be certified as a CDE by the Fund. To qualify as a CDE, an organization must:

- Be a domestic corporation or partnership at the time of the certification application;
- Demonstrate a primary mission of serving, or providing investment capital for, low-income communities or low-income persons; and
- Maintain accountability to residents of low-income communities through representation on a governing board of or advisory board to the entity.

Certification – Community Development Entity (CDE)

Organizations that are certified Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs) by the CDFI Fund and/or Specialized Small Business Investment Companies (SSBICs) by the Small Business Administration automatically qualify as CDEs. Colorado has seven certified CDE’s with various subsidiaries. The certified CDE’s are:

- Capmark Community Development Fund LLC
- Colorado Growth and Revitalization Fund LLC
- Greenline Community Development Fund, LLC
- Hospitality Fund
- Mercy Loan Fund
- Structured Products Group CDE LLC

- The Rose Urban Green Fund, LLC

The Greenline Community Development Fund is the only of the Colorado certified CDEs that has significant remaining allocation (approximately \$45M). The following list show’s national CDEs with remaining allocation that have historically operated in Colorado.

- Waveland Community Development, LLC (\$7.5M)
- ESIC New Markets Partners LP (\$5M)
- Capital Impact Partners (\$8.78M)
- National Cities Fund, LLC (\$14M)
- Community Hospitality Healthcare Services LLC (\$20M)

Certification – Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI)

Colorado has six certified CDFI’s:

1. Colorado Enterprise Fund
2. Colorado Housing Assistance Corporation
3. Colorado Housing Enterprise
4. First nations OWEESTA Corporation
5. Mercy Loan Fund
6. Mile High Community Loan Fund

Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC)

The Low-Income Housing Tax Credit is an incentive program created to encourage the construction or rehabilitation of buildings for low-income tenants. States can only allocate credits within their state boundaries, and the Colorado Housing and Finance Authority (CHFA) administers these credits.

State Small Business Credit Initiative (SSBCI)

Businesses with less than 500 employees that have been turned down for traditional credit resources can qualify for a loan participation or loan guarantee through the SSBCI. CHFA administers the US Treasury’s State Small Business Credit Initiative. Eligible

applicants can get up to 80% guaranteed of a principal loan amount with terms of up to 7 years.

Business Energy Investment Tax Credit (ITC)

In general, credits are available for eligible solar, fuel cell, small wind turbines, geothermal systems, micro-turbines, and combined heat and power systems placed in service on or before December 31, 2016.

Small Business Administration

Small Business Investment Company

SBICs are privately owned and managed investment funds, licensed and regulated by SBA, that use their own capital plus funds borrowed with an SBA guarantee to make equity and debt investments in qualifying small businesses. The U.S. Small Business Administration does not invest directly into small business through the SBIC Program, but provides funding to qualified investment management firms with expertise in certain sectors or industries.

There are currently no qualified SBICs in Colorado. However, a number of SBICs operate outside of the State where they are located.

Department of Health and Human Services

Community Economic Development Grants (CED)

Provides technical and financial assistance for the creation of employment and business opportunities in low-income communities. Serves the dual purposes of facilitating access to healthy food options and creating job and business development opportunities in low-income communities. Includes projects addressing the elimination of food deserts and that finance grocery stores, farmers markets, and other retail sources that provide access to

fresh nutritious food. Funds can be used for construction, marketing and promotion, working capital, training, technical assistance, equipment purchase, and land lease or purchase.

State Programs

Some applicable state funding programs include:

Colorado Tourism Office

Matching Grant Program

The CTO has a matching grant program that provides assistance to the tourism industry for marketing efforts. Travel regions throughout the state are eligible for these grant dollars, as well as statewide associations, organizations and other nonprofit entities that engage in promoting travel throughout the entire state. These grants are competitive and are awarded annually.

Department of Agriculture

Beginning Farmer Program

The Colorado Agricultural Development Authority (CADA) loan program, known as the Beginning Farmer Program, involves a three-way transaction between the lender, the borrower and CADA. Through the issuance of a tax-exempt bond by CADA to the lender, all interest paid by the borrower is tax exempt. The result is an interest rate to the borrower below commercial rates. Funds can only be used for the purchase of agricultural land and depreciable agricultural property.

Enrich Colorado Ag Grant Program

The Program was created by the Colorado Department of Agriculture (CDA) to provide necessary funding for technical and operational issues, research, sales and marketing needs for food and agricultural products that are grown, raised or processed in Colorado. The grant has a 50% match requirement and is for amounts up to \$15,000.

Advancing Colorado's Renewable Energy (ACRE3) Program

The ACRE3 program promotes the development and implementation of renewable energy and energy efficiency projects for Colorado's agricultural producers and processors under the direction of the Colorado Agricultural Value-Added Development Board. The Colorado Department of Agriculture has identified the following three priorities: Agricultural Hydropower, Energy Efficiency, and Renewable Heating & Cooling.

Department of Transportation

2015 Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (Tiger II) Program

Through this program, Discretionary grants will fund capital investments in surface transportation infrastructure and will be awarded on a competitive basis to projects that will have a significant impact on the nation, a region, or metropolitan area.

Department of Local Affairs

Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI) Program

The purpose of the Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI) Program is to help eligible rural communities develop plans and undertake projects to create jobs, drive capital investment, and increase wages to help grow and create resiliency and diversity in the local economy. The program will fund community asset analysis to determine potential economic development opportunities, stakeholder convening for solution development resulting in new or updated local plans competitive grant funding for community infrastructure, business facilities and job training.

The HOME Investment Partnership Program

The HOME Investment Partnership Program (HOME) was created by the National Affordable Housing Act of 1990 and HOME funds provide competitive funding to local government, non-profit, and private developers. The purpose of the HOME Program is to provide a wide range of activities that build, buy, and/or rehabilitate affordable housing for rent or ownership or provide direct rental assistance to low-income people.

Housing Development Grant & Loan Funds

These funds consist of monies appropriated to the Colorado Affordable Housing Construction Grants and Loan Fund by the General Assembly. Use of HDG/HDLF funds requires a 50% match. HDG/HDLF provides funds for acquisition, rehabilitation, and new construction through a competitive application process to improve, preserve or expand the supply of affordable housing and to finance foreclosure prevention activities in Colorado, as well as to fund the acquisition of housing and economic data necessary to advise the State Housing Board on local housing conditions.

Private Activity Bond Program

Private Activity Bonds are tax-exempt bonds issued for specific purposes including manufacturing “small issue” industrial development, single-family mortgages, qualified redevelopment projects, qualified residential rental projects, exempt facility projects, mortgage credit certificates and student loans.

Conservation Trust Fund (CTF)

CTF monies from net lottery proceeds are distributed to more than 400 eligible local governments: counties, cities, towns and special districts that provide park and recreation services in their service plans. Funding can be used for interests in land and water; for park or recreation purposes; for all types of open space, including but not

limited to flood plains, green belts, agricultural lands or scenic areas; or for scientific, historic, scenic, recreational, aesthetic or similar purpose.

Energy & Mineral Impact Assistance Fund (EIAF)

The EIAF program provides grants and loans for planning, construction and maintenance of public facilities, and the provision of public services. Eligible recipients are political subdivisions socially or economically impacted by the development, processing or energy conversion of minerals and mineral fuels. Projects funded include but are not limited to water and sewer improvements, road improvements, construction/improvements to recreation centers, senior centers and other public facilities, fire protection buildings and equipment, and local government planning.

The Department of Natural Resources

The Colorado Healthy Rivers Fund Grants

Established jointly by the Colorado Water Conservation Board and the Water Quality Control Commission, in cooperation with the Colorado Watershed Assembly, the Program helps support local watershed organizations in their efforts to provide clean water, protect habitat, and improve recreation and accessibility.