A picture containing text, clock

Description automatically generated**Custer County Projects Summary**

**Access to Capital**

The region has moderate to strong capacity in the availability of debt capital, though the lack of a regional SBA 504 packager is a need to be addressed. There is a need to strengthen existing Revolving loan funds to increase capacity and perhaps to offer niche products. Within Pueblo County, there are strong incentive programs for specific types of industries and job creations. The region, however, is an equity desert, with little access to capital for startups, follow on funding, or private equity funds to help existing businesses to pivot or grow. The strategy is to increase access to equity capital in the region and develop an entrepreneurial ecosystem that supports startups in the tech sector and the intellectual property sector.

**SCEDD Regional Programs**

Program- **SoCo Angels Support**. Provide three years of operational support to develop an early Angel startup network of Accredited Investors to fund the seed stage for tech and intellectual property startups

Status of Program- Development

Lead- SCEDD, SCIL, SoCo Angels,

Program Cost Estimate--$300k per annum

Funding Options- EDA technical assistance grant, Foundation grants

Program: **Angel fund.** Adjunctive to SoCo Angels, the development of a separate fund can support individual angel investments with an institutional investment, or a “sidecar” fund created by accredited investors who want to supplement individual investments with group efforts.

Status of Program—Conceptual

Lead: SCEDD, SCIL, SoCo Angels

Program Cost Estimate: Institutional fund--$500k; Sidecar fund $500k

Funding options: Institutional: Foundations; Sidecar: Accredited investors of SoCo Angels

**Broadband/Communications**

**SCEDD Regional Programs**

Program—**Broadband Support Office**. SCEDD will create a two-to-three-person office to take the lead in implementing broadband with a regional approach. Local projects need to be rolled up into regional and sub-region initiatives to secure adequate funding and to manage fewer, but larger projects. Part of that effort will be to create a region-wide grant match gap funds to assist with securing funds.

Status of Program—In development

Lead—SCEDD

Project Cost Estimate--$250k per annum in operational support; $1M per annum in grant match gap fund

Funding options—EDA technical assistance grant, DOLA, Electricity providers, County government, Foundation grants.

**The four broadband projects defined and flowed from the original UAACOG Five-County Five Year Broadband Strategic Plan are:**

Project – **Six Towers Project** - The objective of this project was to construct six strategically located professional communication (internet; not cellular) towers with public funds benefiting Custer County (towers will be CC assets) that each will accommodate a max of two Wireless Internet Service Providers (WISP).  These six towers, professionally designed, built and equipped will allow the two occupying WISPs to provide service to an additional 40% of Custer County addresses.  This with existing incumbent coverage would assure nearly 80% of residents to have access to broadband service.

Status of Project – In progress

Lead – CCEDC/Custer County

Project Cost Estimate – N/A

Funding Options – EDA,

Project- **Tri-County Middle Mile Fiber Optic System -** Custer County lacks adequate and reliable Middle Mile Fiber Optic service.  Existing services are not supported with redundant and diverse middle mile transport.  As a result, existing middle mile internet service is unreliable.  This project would provide Custer, Fremont and Huerfano counties with a middle mile transport infrastructure that is fully redundant and diverse, in addition to being able to provide unlimited amount of bandwidth depending on capability of fiber optic electronics installed.  This project or one similar needs to be initiated in the very near future.  This project is envisioned as a Tri- (i.e., three) County endeavor (IGA) with its own governing body and management + O&M staff.  It would provide dark-fiber for long-term lease.  288 strands installed end-to-end with 96 strands “owned” by each of the three counties.

Status of Project –

Lead – CCEDC/Custer County

Project Cost Estimate –

Funding Options –

Project- **Westcliffe/Silver Cliff Fiber Optic Transport Infrastructure to each premise within the city boundaries of the two towns.**

Status of Project –

Lead – CCEDC

Funding Options -

Westcliffe & Silver Cliff envisions an internet (i.e., broadband) infrastructure which provides gigabit (1000 Mbps) internet to each and every resident, business and governmental facility via fiber optic transport.  This fiber optic infrastructure would be publicly-funded, This project is envisioned as a Tri- (i.e., three) Government endeavor (IGA) with its own governing body and management + O&M staff.  It would provide dark-fiber for long-term lease.  None of the governmental agencies involved desire to be in the broadband providing business (i.e., an ISP).  The publicly owned fiber-optic infrastructure would be public owned and made available via lease to private ISP providers via long-term lease.  The fiber optic infrastructure would allow for competitive ISPs if the market size determined it practical.

Project- **Westcliffe/Silver Cliff Main Street Wi-Fi System (complimentary Public Access Internet provided at local public areas).**

Status of Project - CCEDC currently provides and operates a 12-Access Point Main Street Wi-Fi System through the center of Westcliffe on Main Street.  It was installed in May 2015 and has provided excellent service since.  It has slowly grown from the original six APs to today’s twelve.

Lead – CCEDC

Project Cost Estimate - The original system design called for a total of 32 APs to provide service to all public areas of Westcliffe, Silver Cliff and the County Fairgrounds.  At some point funding needs to be found to complete this system.  The system hardware is capitalized and owned (including insured) by CCEDC.  CCEDC has a O&M contract with Colorado Central Telecom (originally with SECOM) to cover operations, maintenance & support at a monthly rate of $750.00 per month.  This provides internet bandwidth of 100 Mbps May through October and internet bandwidth of 50 Mbps September through April.  This accounts for $500 of the $750 monthly rate.

**Critical Infrastructure**

Project- **Custer County, Round Mtn Water & Sanitation District.** Replacement of aged water meters and primary municipal well. Aged water meters are inaccurate and are a major source of revenue loss for the District. the District's primary drinking water well has completely failed, and the District is hard pressed to meet current and future water demands for the communities of Westcliffe and Silver Cliff.

Status of Project – Pre/construction/Engineering

Lead – Round Mountain Water & Sanitation District

Project Cost Estimate – $2,105,000.00

Funding Options – SRF grant $10,000.00, SRF engineering gran $129,500.00, DOLA grant $850,000.00.

Project- **Custer, Round Mtn Water & Sanitation District.** Colorado Division of Water Resources has compelled the District to construct a water reservoir to address depletions from our municipal wells. The District does not have the funds to finance this needed project.

Status of Project – Pre/construction/Engineering

Lead – Round Mountain Water & Sanitation District

Project Cost Estimate - $2,000,000.00

Funding Options – Pre engineering grant $10,000.00, Engineering/design grant $172,000.00 Partnership with UAWCD.

Project- **Custer, Round Mtn Water & Sanitation District.** Water main replacement/up-sizing and installation of 500,000 gal finished water storage

Status of Project – Planning

Lead – Round Mountain Water & Sanitation district

Project Cost Estimate – $10 to $15 million

Funding Options – DOLA grant for water model study

Project- **Custer, Round Mtn Water & Sanitation District.** New Colorado Health Dept. standards and regulations necessitate the new treatment plant design and cost to be far above the ability of the District to finance without significant outside financial intervention. The District serves a population of 1340 with a MHI of $31,500. The customers of the District simply cannot pay for the new plant without significant help.

Status of Project – Engineering completed

Lead – Round Mountain Water & Sanitation District

Project Cost Estimate – $13, 222,000.00

Funding Options – UDSA loan/grant package $5 million DOLA Grant $1 million

Project **- Purchase and install sustainable, net-zero, waste processing plant manufactured by Sedron to supplement or replace existing services with a scalable solution for growing communities in Custer County.**

Status of Project – Conceptual. Planned – Site Studies, Hydraulic Modeling and Alternatives, Evaluation Complete.

Lead – Easel Solutions, LLC

Project Cost Estimate – Round Mountain Water & Sanitation District (RMSWD) for matching and federal/state agencies for funding

Funding Options – Round Mountain Water & Sanitation District (RMSWD) for matching and federal/state agencies for funding

Project **- Custer County. Landfill and Recycling Center**. Custer’s current recycling program is not fulfilling local goals. An expanded program is desired and to locate it at the county landfill.

Status of Project – Grant Proposal preparation and submittal

Lead – Custer County, with the non-profit High-Country Recycling/Sustainable Ways

Project Cost Estimate – $381,000.00

Funding Options – CDPH, donations made to High Country/Sustainable Ways

**Education/Work Force Development**

Project – **Workforce Development/Trades School –** Local schools already have a relationship with PCC, allowing high school students the ability to take college courses while in high school. A similar effort with PCC is desire to assist non-college bound students with vocational training and to develop and train the local workforce.

Status – Conceptual

Lead – PCC/Local Schools

Project Cost Estimate – N/A

Funding Options –

**Renewable Energy**

Project – **Custer County Solar Garden Coop.** Grid Connected solar energy production farm for local use. A community solar garden farm to create energy credits from the local connected utilities (Black Hills and Sangre de Cristo) to be used solely by Community “owners” to offset/reduce/eliminate their energy costs.

Status of Project – Conceptual

Lead – Easel Solutions, LLC

Project Cost Estimate – N/A

Funding Options – Black Hills Energy matching federal funds

Project: **Custer County Solar? (Michael – do you know anything about this project? Is it a separate project from the above?)**

Status: conceptual

Lead:  Round Mountain Water and Sanitation District

**Recreation and Tourism**

Project – **Westcliffe Tennis Courts?**

Status of Project – Conceptual

Lead –

Project Cost Estimate –

Funding Options – GOCO

Project – **Wetmore Playground**

Status of Project – Planned

Lead – Custer County/Ruth Roper

Project Cost Estimate – $9,604.54

Funding Options – GOCO

Project – **Local Trails Improved/Maintained/Developed.** Trails for All (a local nonprofit) has already developed a master plan, which reviews all the trails in Custer County. The plan will be used to further improve trails in the area using grant funds and volunteers. Priority trails are: Around-the-Town Trails and the Silver Cliff Ranch Trail.

Status of Project – Planning

Lead – Steve Laswell/Trails for All

Project Cost Estimate –

Funding Options – GOCO

Project – **Silver Cliff Museum Playground Rehab/Replacement.** The museum’s playground equipment needs significant repairs or replacement. It does not meet ADA requirements and is considered dangerous.

Status of Project – Conceptual

Lead – Town of Silver Cliff

Project Cost Estimate – $200,000

Funding Options –

Project – **All Aboard Westcliffe**

Status of Project – Conceptual

Lead – Cathy McCarthy, All Aboard Westcliffe, Inc., 501(3) C non-profit.

Project Cost Estimate – $3,500.00

Funding Options – History Colorado

**Health Care/Public Health/ Mental Health**

Project – **Custer County Public Health?**

Status of Project – Conceptual

Lead – Custer County Dr. Brown?

Project Cost Estimate –

Funding Options –

Project – **Sol Vista Mental Health?**

Status of Project – Conceptual

Lead – Custer County Dr. Brown?

Project Cost Estimate –

Funding Options –

**Transportation**

Project – **EV Charging Stations Along Frontier Scenic Byway?** As there is increased use of electric cars and bikes, charging stations are needed. Hwy 96, which runs from Pueblo to Westcliffe and back east to Colorado City is a prime highway for placement of said EV stations to include one in Westcliffe.

Status of Project – Conceptual

Lead – Custer County

Project Cost Estimate –

Funding Options – Colorado Energy Office

Project – **Regional Van/Bus Service Study.** Limited medical transport is available for Vets and others. A study is needed to determine if vans and funds are available to address this need.

Status of Project – Conceptual

Lead – Charles Bogle

Project Cost Estimate –

Funding Options – N/A

Project – **Bike Lanes on Highways.** Both Hwy 96 and 69 are popular with area cyclists and tourists, but the Hwy shoulders are narrow making it dangerous for drivers and riders both. A bike lane is desired. Trails for All (a local nonprofit) has already developed a master plan, which reviews all the trails in Custer County. The plan will be used to further improve trails and bike lanes in the area using grant funds and volunteers.

Status of Project – Conceptual

Lead – Steve Laswell/Trails for All

Project Cost Estimate –

Funding Options – CDOT, GOCO, OEDIT

Project – **Airport Improvements**?

Status of Project – Conceptual

Lead –

Project Cost Estimate –

Funding Options –

Project – **Airport Helipad**. A helipad is needed primarily for safe Medical Airlifts but could also be used by others. Possible location are: the airport, or upgrading the existing Silver Cliff pad, or perhaps at the new judicial building.

Status of Project – Conceptual

Lead – Custer County OEM

Project Cost Estimate –

Funding Options –

**Other**

Project – **Early Childhood Ed./Childcare?**

Status of Project – Conceptual

Lead –

Project Cost Estimate –

Funding Options –

Project – **Judicial Building aka Justice Center Project**

Status of Project – Planned

Lead – Custer County

Project Cost Estimate – $18.7 Million

Funding Options – Underfunded Courts Grant, DOLA, 2% sales tax