



Grand County
Business & Resource Hub
Report
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Executive summary

For the last twenty years, the Grand County community has had a clear vision for a centralized business and resource hub—a co-located building— that includes health and human service nonprofits, government agencies, and healthcare organizations. This vision is expansive: a hub could also have community space, businesses, a commercial kitchen, and other rentable space. It could remarkably benefit the local economy and improve service reach and resource sharing.

With the leadership of the Grand County Rural Health Network (the Network) and its partners, this vision has come close to reality, thwarted only by timing but not by lack of demand or resolve. The Network renewed this effort in 2023 and, with its consulting partner, the Steadman Group, launched work from August through October 2023, including focus groups, the development of a feasibility framework, communications planning, stakeholder meetings, and a stakeholder survey. This report is the result of that work.

The two focus groups expressed their need for an extensive range of health and human services, with a priority on behavioral health services, including mental health and substance use disorder supports. They want a welcoming building with affordable services and amenities such as appointment privacy, community space, and childcare. They also agreed that the ideal hub location would be in Granby, with a satellite location in Kremmling.

Stakeholder engagement meetings with government officials, service providers, and community members provided important insights. The consensus critical issues were initial access to capital and long-term funding, a business plan with concept clarity, and an ownership and management structure. They had an enthusiastic expectation for strengthened connections between service providers, businesses, and the community, and innovation of new approaches, as well as economic benefits from business incubation, job creation, strengthened employee recruitment, retention, and job satisfaction. They also recognized the need for government support.

Stakeholder survey results strongly support a centralized business and resource hub in Granby, with a potential satellite location in Kremmling. Some survey respondents are concerned about the project's financial feasibility and how it will be funded, including that it is not funded through new taxes. Respondents want a wide range of services, with health and human services, mental health and substance use disorder supports, and housing services topping the list. Most respondents want to take a specific active role and continue to be engaged in the planning and creation of the building.

Based on these findings, the Steadman Group recommends actionable, feasible, and immediate next steps, including:

1. Facilitating and codifying organizational and individual commitments
2. Conducting a feasibility study
3. Developing a business plan
4. Creating a fundraising plan
5. Continue to regularly engage the community and stakeholders

Background & history

Grand County, Colorado, is a sparsely populated rural mountain community. Many residents lack health insurance, and most do not make enough to make ends meet, yet too much to qualify for assistance programs. This sparse population and the large land mass present unique challenges in delivering healthcare and supportive services.

For almost two decades, the Grand County community has been working steadily toward a co-located business and resource hub—a one-stop shop for a wide range of health and social services— and has come astonishingly close to making the idea a reality.

In the early 2000s, the Grand County Rural Health Network (the Network) took on the cause, starting with a 2000 healthcare resource assessment, highlighting the need for this hub. GCRHN then collaborated with Middle Park Health (previously the Kremmling Memorial Health District) to start planning for a hub and healthcare facility location in Granby.

Spurred by a positive 2005 economic impact study that strongly supported this concept, the Network and its partners detailed a potential ownership and management structure, tenants, and other stakeholders. This work resulted in a \$40 million Colorado Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) grant for the hub that was unexpectedly cut by more than half because of the 2008 Great Recession. Partners prioritized the remaining DOLA funds to build only a Granby healthcare facility, now Middle Park Health Granby Campus, but no centralized building for other social or health services.

The Network and its partners resurrected the hub concept in 2017 through community conversations and identifying potential tenants and stakeholders. They advanced the previous work by conducting a space needs assessment and mapping the needs of various potential sites. However, this work halted due to a lack of consensus and political support, despite findings from the 2018 county community health needs assessment that continued to point to the need for a hub. Progress also stagnated through the 2020-2021 Covid-19 pandemic.

Yet the need has remained and become even more critical. For example, the 2022 behavioral health strategic plan reinforced community demand and benefits, particularly for the underserved population. For this reason, Network has again launched an effort to make a co-located business and resource hub a reality.

A full history is available [here](#).

Focus groups

The Network and the Steadman Group conducted two focus group meetings:

- September 5, 2023 (Conducted in Spanish) with 11 participants
- September 7, 2023 (Conducted in English) with 12 participants

The purpose of these focus groups was to refresh the knowledge of the experiences and needs of people who would use a hub. In addition, the focus group findings informed the next steps in the project, including the stakeholder meetings, recommendations on a feasibility framework, the stakeholder survey, and the report recommendations. Participants also provided basic anonymized demographic information that spanned age, sex, family status, and other categories, including residence. Facilitators asked the focus groups questions on, e.g., their current challenges, services needs, location of the hub, important hub design features, and amenities.

There were five (5) general findings.

People need an extensive range of health and human services.

The list was long and included a general need for Spanish-speaking services for on-site interpretation and translation services. Examples:

- Health services
- Child and elder care and related transportation support
- Support groups (domestic violence, alcohol recovery, new mother's and women's health, men's support)
- Foodbank and other food assistance
- Job/temp services and job training
- Parenting and foster parent classes
- Drug testing and DUI classes
- There was also specific mention of the need for "[rape kits](#)," (sexual assault kits), which reportedly are not available in Grand County

Behavioral health services are a specific priority.

These services would include mental health and substance use disorder prevention, treatment, and recovery supports.

The community wants a welcoming building and specific amenities.

People desire a building that would feel like it belongs to the community, feels very inclusive, and has no screening of citizenship status. Some building features people want are:

- Compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act
- Privacy for appointments
- Technology access, such as the Internet and community computers
- Space for community meetings and events
- Temporary shelter and public showers
- Large public space
- Community kitchen
- Child play area

People need affordable services and amenities.

There was agreement that the building must offer free or affordable services supported by Medicaid, Medicare, and other public programs. In addition, people need free and affordable

building amenities such as rental space and business and coworking space that could be supported by grants, donations, fundraising, and building revenue generation.

People agreed on a hub location in Granby.

Granby is the preferred hub location based on where most of the need is perceived and where people would be willing to travel. They also said a satellite hub in Kremmling could provide a subset of hub services and telehealth options.

Stakeholder meetings

Three public stakeholder meetings took place between October 11th and 12th, 2023, at the Grand Fire Protection District No.1 in Granby, with 39 participants comprising government officials, organizational representatives, private citizens, Grand County Rural Health Network staff, and Steadman Group staff. The participant list is available [here](#).

The Network and the Steadman Group provided meeting participants with an overview of the hub's history and background and the focus group findings. They then framed participants' discussion around the general feasibility of the hub. Participants discussed their views and knowledge on financial issues, the market for the hub, legal and technical requirements, operational needs, potential commitments, and needed support. The stakeholder meetings presentation is [here](#).

Following these discussions, participants broke into workgroups at each of the three meetings to review and develop consensus on four key questions:

1. Feasibility: What are the top three (3) feasibility issues that a Grand County business and resource hub must address?
2. Benefits: What are the top three (3) benefits of establishing a Grand County business and resource hub?
3. Challenges: What are the top three (3) challenges (or barriers) to establishing and sustaining a Grand County business and resource hub?
4. Commitments: What are the top three (3) commitments or support needed to establish and successfully sustain a Grand County business and resource hub?

Workgroups developed consensus on the following top issues.

Feasibility

There is a need for more clarity on the hub concept and a business plan that includes a proposed ownership and management structure and identification of short-term and long-term funding. These efforts require continued stakeholder, community support, audience-targeted education, and particular attention to population distribution and transportation needs.

Benefits

A Granby-located Business & Resource Hub would strengthen connections between service providers, businesses, and the community and "ideation" or innovation of new approaches. It would also improve the community's utilization, discovery, and understanding of services and other supports. There would be a boost to Granby's economy plus operational and

organizational benefits through business incubation, job creation, strengthened employee recruitment, retention, job satisfaction, and availability of new community meeting space in a thriving and active building.

Challenges

The workgroups agreed that the critical challenges or barriers to launching and sustaining a hub will be financial, including initial access to capital, long-term funding, and general economic uncertainty. Financial issues are also connected to decisionmakers’ and community support and developing a shared vision. In addition, other issues like zoning, permits, and the safety and security of information, people, and space could be significant hurdles.

Commitments

Workgroups identified several needed commitments with agreement that county and local government support is essential. In addition, there will need to be formal hub tenant commitments, commitments from community partners and small businesses, support of the Chambers of Commerce (Granby, Grand Lake, Hot Sulphur Springs, Kremmling, and Winter Park/Fraser Valley), and significant involvement of organizations focused on housing, workforce development, and transportation. Workgroups also identified the need for a sustainable operating model, established ownership and leadership structure, and commitment that the hub would not require raising taxes.

Stakeholder survey

The Steadman Group developed a brief online stakeholder survey through Survey Monkey in English and Spanish through Survey Monkey. The Network publicly disseminated the online survey throughout Grand County from 11 October to 18 November 2023. The English survey collected 163 responses. The Spanish survey collected two responses.

<u>English Survey</u>		<u>Spanish Survey</u>	
Affiliation	Respondents (%)	Affiliation	Respondents (%)
Nonprofit	40 (36%)	Private citizen	2 (100%)
Private citizen	38 (35%)		
Other ¹	25 (23%)		
Government	20 (18%)		
Healthcare provider	17 (15%)		
Community leader	9 (8%)		
Small business	7 (6%)		
Business	5 (5%)		
Consulting	5 (5%)		
Real estate	3 (3%)		
Social services provider	2 (2%)		

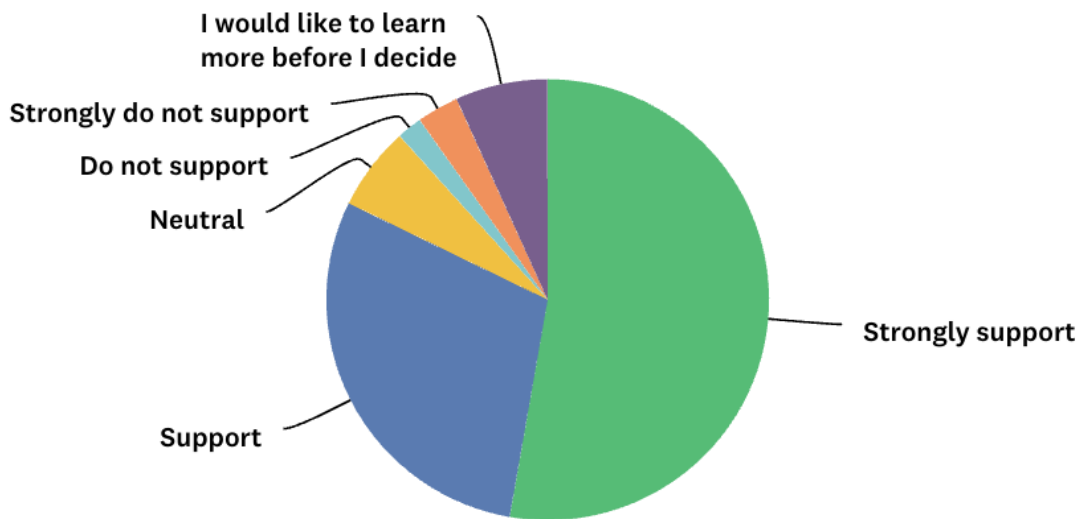
¹ Primarily educators, and also included the media, a mortgage company, and a disability advocacy, awareness, and accessibility group

Following is a summary of the survey results.

Concept support

The majority (82%) either strongly support (53%) or support (29%) the idea of a centralized building for various social and community services in Grand County. Both Spanish-speaking respondents strongly support (totalmente a favor) the concept.

Do you generally support the idea of a centralized building for various social and community services in Grand County?
(English Survey: 163 Respondents conducted October - November 2023)



Comments typical of those supporting the concept:

“A centralized space would not only serve practical needs but also cultivate a sense of community through events that stimulate the mind, promoting holistic wellness beyond conventional avenues like drinking [alcohol in bars].”

“Facilitaría en gran manera el vivir de todos en la comunidad lo que haría posible un desarrollo de todas las actividades económicas del área. (It would greatly facilitate the life of everyone in the community, which would make possible the development of all economic activities in the area.)”

A small minority (5%) do not support (2%) or strongly do not support (3%) the concept, or questioned the data that has been presented to the community demonstrating the need:

“This sounds like another idea on paper a lot of people will like, but it comes at a huge cost and should be done more efficiently...”

“I don't believe the "data" put forth of overwhelming need to centralize. YOUR questions [in the survey] are leading and have a presumption of "strong community consensus." The “data”... was < 1% of the entire county population...”

Granby location and Kremmling satellite office

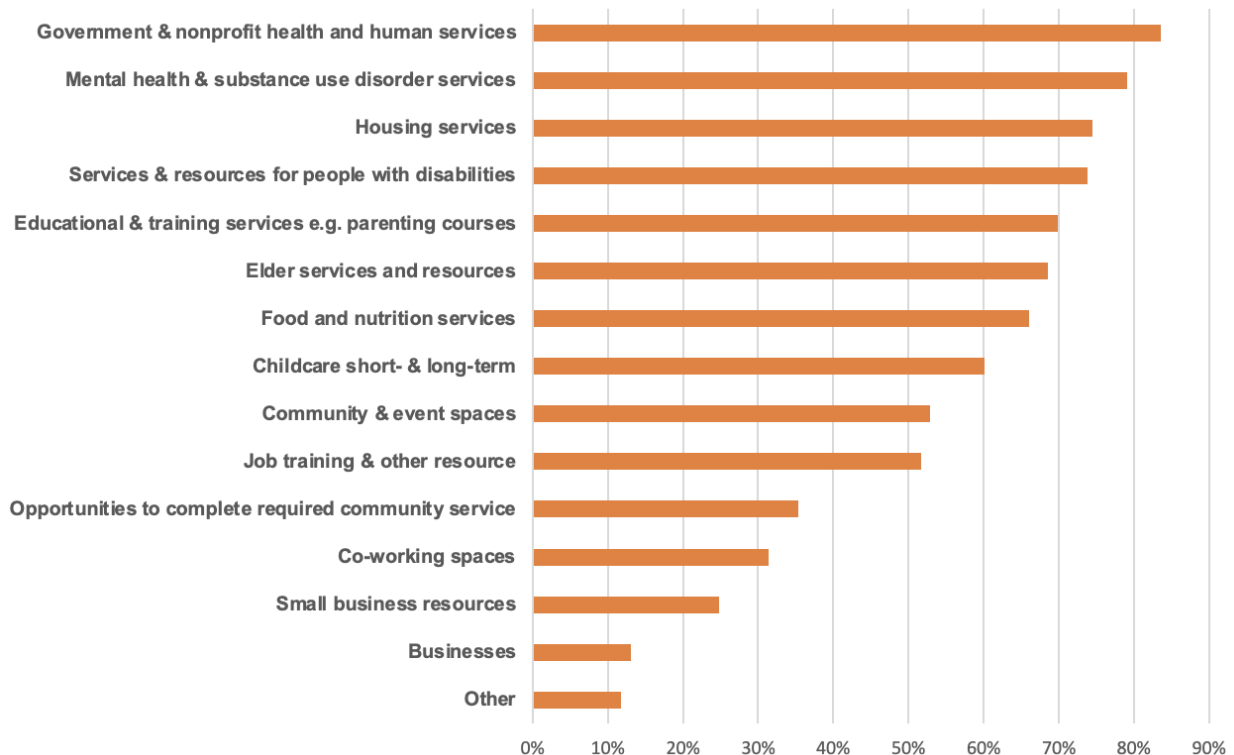
There is strong consensus (78%) to locate the centralized building in Granby: 41% strongly support and 37% support the Granby location. In addition, the majority of respondents (70%) strongly support (31%) or support (39%) a Kremmling satellite office. Both Spanish-speaking respondents strongly support the Granby location and strongly support or support the Kremmling satellite office.

Desired services

Respondents want a range of services housed in this building, with the government and nonprofit health and human services, and mental health and substance use disorder services topping the list, followed by housing services. Fewer respondents want business-related services like co-working spaces, small business resources, and actual businesses. Spanish-speaking respondents shared these same preferences, although one wants coworking spaces.

What services are critical to you or your organization to be housed in this building?

(English Survey: 163 Respondents conducted October - November 2023)



Involvement

There is enthusiasm for involvement across affiliations. About 46% of respondents want to take an active role in the planning and creation of the building. This includes several organizations

that want to be either a founding funder or sponsor, a founding tenant or owner, partner in operations and managing the facility, a partner in business development, or provide other financial support. Over one-third (39%) want to decide later on how they would like to be involved, and 15% do not want to be involved.

Community engagement

Over 74% want to be included in future communications about the Grand County Business & Resource Hub.

Other feedback

Respondents also provided a range of other feedback, suggestions, and ideas. Some examples include:

“There are [a] plethora of housing authorities in Grand County...Having all the housing authorities more centralized in a resource hub would be very beneficial [and] allow for collaborative solutions to the housing crisis, rather than each authority tackling the problem individually.”

“[I]t would help if this survey had a more open-ended question about [the] need for another satellite in addition to Kremmling. Those who haven’t been involved before may want to voice a need for satellite locations in other towns/areas.”

“Would really like to see a business plan or feasibility study to see the sustainability of the project.”

Recommendations

The 2023 focus groups, stakeholder meetings, and stakeholder survey demonstrate a clear continued need for a centralized business and resource hub that includes health and human service nonprofits, government agencies, healthcare organizations, businesses, community and rentable space, and other amenities.

Strong community consensus is that this hub can benefit the local economy and improve service reach and resource sharing. There is also consensus on feasible paths to advance the hub concept, the commitments needed, and the challenges. Finally, there is consensus on locating the building in Granby, with the potential for a satellite office in Kremmling.

There are also significant concerns about cost and data: how this will be funded, the need for a feasibility study and business plan, and not funding the building through new tax burdens on the community.

Based on this work, we recommend the following actionable, feasible, and immediate next steps. The Network should lead or facilitate these steps only in partnership with the stakeholders and the community.

1. **Facilitate and codify organizational and individual commitments.** Based on the stakeholder survey responses, these commitments will be essential to advancing the business and resource hub.
 - a. Assign roles based on survey results
 - b. Launch workgroups and schedule regular meetings through 2024 to explore and develop plans and options for:
 - i. Business plan and feasibility study
 - ii. Building ownership, leasing, and facility management structure
 - iii. Tenant structure, building use, and space allocation
 - iv. Services coordination
 - v. Fundraising and capital campaign
 - vi. Community education and information exchange
2. **Conduct a feasibility study.** Consider engaging an expert consulting firm to analyze:
 - a. Market feasibility: Detailed look at demand, target demographics, and market needs.
 - b. Technical feasibility: Assessment of any technological requirements, infrastructure, and zoning laws.
 - c. Financial feasibility: Cost estimates, funding requirements, and ROI calculations.
 - d. Legal feasibility: Regulatory requirements and potential legal hurdles.
 - e. Operational feasibility: Facilities management, maintenance, annual, long-term
 - f. Evaluation of the human and material resources required.
3. **Develop a business plan.** This should be based on inputs from the feasibility study. Core components of a business plan will include:
 - a. Building concept, mission, and vision.
 - b. Market research:
 - i. Demand for services.
 - ii. Analysis of similar ventures and their successes or failures.
 - iii. Target demographics.
 - c. Ownership and organizational structure:
 - i. Type of business entity (non-profit, LLC, ownership model, etc.). The Network is aware of different ownership models, primarily based on the Edmonton Non-profit Shared Space Feasibility Toolkit. Options can include non-equity-based government and private options and equity-based nonprofit collaborative, co-op, and condo models.² However, these are only basic options that the Network and its partner can explore, many being driven by issues such as building use, zoning, building size and design, permitting, property tax, and space allocation issues. Engaging with the Grand County Building Commission and county and city building planning will be essential in exploring these options.
 - ii. Tenancy and leasing model options.
 - iii. Organizational chart and roles.
 - d. Service Offering:

² In general, equity models require a capital investment, financial risk, and build the owner's assets. Non-equity models may not require owner capital investment, limit financial risk, and do not build the owner's assets.

- i. Description of the services and amenities offered.
 - ii. Partnerships with government agencies, non-profits, etc.
 - e. Marketing Plan: Branding, outreach, and community engagement strategies.
 - f. Financial Plan:
 - i. Projections for revenue, costs, and profitability.
 - ii. Budget allocation for construction, operation, and staffing.
 - g. Operational Plan: Details about the facility, equipment, and staff required.
 - h. Timeline: Phases of project development.
 - i. Risk Assessment: Identification of potential risks and mitigation strategies.
- 4. **Create a fundraising plan.** Depending on business plan outcomes, this may require an intensive capital campaign for a set time. Consider a capital campaign expert consultant or devote a full-time employment position to fundraising. The plan should detail:
 - a. Funding Requirements:
 - i. Specific financial needs by category (construction, operations, staffing, etc.).
 - b. Funding Sources:
 - i. Identify potential funding sources (grants, loans, investors, public funding, etc.).
 - c. Fundraising Strategy:
 - i. Plans for campaigns, grant applications, investor pitches, etc.
 - d. Financial Projections:
 - i. Anticipated revenue, expenditures, and profitability to demonstrate return on investment for potential funders.
 - e. Communications:
 - i. Prepare slide decks, videos, etc, to engage potential donors or investors.
- 5. **Continue to regularly and meaningfully engage the community and stakeholders.** Continue the conversation with the community and all stakeholders to listen and provide progress updates on the above actions:
 - a. Develop an advocacy plan, identify targeted audiences, and messaging
 - b. Schedule regular community meetings through 2024

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