

# Panguitch Business Opportunity Center

Rural Communities Opportunity Grant  
Project Proposal



Submitted by Panguitch City  
November 17, 2023

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# I. Historical Context



Colorized Photo of the Panguitch High School nearing completion in 1939

When the Old Panguitch High School was built, Panguitch was a thriving city. Lumber was the primary industry as evidenced by the highly successful Kaibab sawmill and the logging industry that fed it. This brought prosperity to the community. There were two car dealerships, hardware stores, and multiple grocery stores downtown.

The block, historically known as School-Square, has been a cornerstone of Panguitch City's educational and communal history.



The site originally featured a prominent three-story red brick elementary school. Adjacent to it, the yellow brick building, beginning construction in the late 1930s and



completed in 1939, stands as a testament to the city's educational legacy. The new high school building, captured in a circa 1940 child's drawing, represents not just a structure, but decades of community development, with forty-six senior classes graduating through the year 1985 when it was shuttered in favor of the newly constructed high school (current Panguitch High) on the opposite corner of School-Square.



Glory days of the old Panguitch High.



Junior Class photo early 1950's on the High School Steps.

## From Education to Business Incubation

The community that once thrived was severely impacted by the closure of the sawmill in the 1990s. This necessitated immediate changes in order for the community to survive economically. Wise city leaders knew that there needed to be a shift to new industries and increased entrepreneurship to save the town.

There was a shortage of commercial downtown space. The leaders believed that the Old High School building could again serve the community now as a low-rent location for small businesses and startups to help diversify the economy. Panguitch City purchased the Old High School building from the school district after it had been sitting vacant for a few years. The building was renovated, adding an elevator and upgrades to some of the rooms. It was named the Business Incubation Center and it served as a very needed commercial space to reinvigorate economic growth and prosperity. This and other initiatives led to a reinvigoration of the local economy.

Fast-forward nearly 30 years, the current economic landscape of Panguitch is once again characterized by heavy reliance on a single industry—tourism. While tourism has provided economic opportunities, it has also exposed our community to significant vulnerabilities. We are constantly on the edge, vulnerable to natural disasters (fires), pandemics, and global events. During the summer tourist season, our unemployment rate stands at approximately 3.4%, which may seem favorable compared to the state average of 2.4%. However, this statistic masks the harsh reality that, as the tourist season wanes, our unemployment rates surge to alarming levels, reaching as high as 16%. This cyclic pattern of feast and famine is a recurring challenge that takes a toll on our residents and the local economy. It is imperative that we address this issue urgently and seek a more stable and diversified economic future for our community. A return to



entrepreneurship and increased diversification is badly needed. Yet we still face the same challenges as they did many years ago—a shortage of low-rent commercial space for entrepreneurs and small startups.

## Urgent Renovation Needs

However, recent years have brought new challenges to the Old High School building. The building's roof began to fail a few years ago. A patchwork of repairs proved inadequate. The resultant leaks have caused damage to interiors, including dripping ceilings and ruined carpets. Financial constraints have hindered comprehensive repairs, leading to the closure of parts of the building. This not only impacts the current tenants but also stalls the potential usage of the building, directly affecting the economic vibrancy of Panguitch City.



Severe leaking requires ceiling replacement.

## Current Tenancy Amidst Challenges

Despite the building's challenges, it continues to serve as a vital hub for six business entities, leveraging the less affected areas to maintain their operations. Commercial office and retail space is scarce in Panguitch. This building is critical to these six businesses and could potentially be a home for several other businesses once this space is renovated. One notable example is a renter who endures persistent leaks, a testament to their commitment to remain employed within Panguitch. Faced with the stark alternative of relocating their jobs to Cedar City, they have chosen to persevere in their hometown. So, they do all they can to mitigate the drips, placing buckets where the drips begin to appear. But at some point in the not-so-distant future, they will likely relent and their jobs will leave our community taking them and their families with them.



Despite a few leaks they have stayed in the office since moving to Cedar City is the alternative.

## Thriving Businesses in the Face of Uncertainty

In the northeast corner of our historic building, a burgeoning T-Shirt business exemplifies entrepreneurial success. This business, currently flourishing and poised to expand its workforce, reflects the potential of the Business Opportunity Center as a





Entrance on Center Street, now considered the front of the building.

catalyst for local economic growth. They aspire to extend their operations into the adjoining vacant space, eager to invest in upgrades that could further propel their success. However, this expansion and investment are overshadowed by the uncertainty surrounding the building's future. The fate of the building, thus, directly impacts the growth trajectory of this promising enterprise.

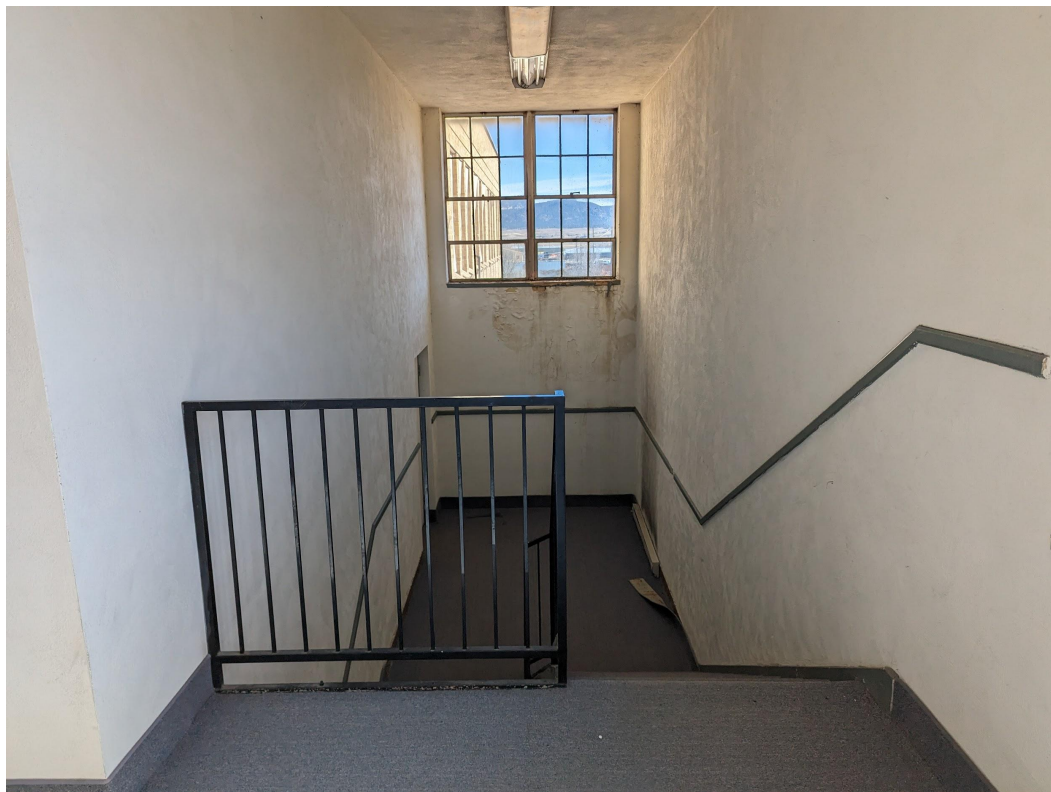
Another renter, the Children's Justice Center, operates in the space adjacent to the T-shirt business. This organization provides valuable services to the community, offering support and advocacy in critical areas. Like the T-Shirt business, they too face the challenge of limited alternative locations in Panguitch, further emphasizing the building's role as an indispensable community resource.

The building houses three additional small businesses that rent space on the second floor on the east end of the building. These entities utilize the large open space for various teaching and training activities.





Three rooms are unaffected by leaking but need fresh paint, replacement windows and heating.



South stairwell window has a severe leak in need of a new window.



South end of the upper hallway ready for a coat of paint and some carpet.

## II. Project Vision

Our vision for the Panguitch Business Opportunity Center is to transform it into a dynamic and thriving business complex, bolstering the local economy and fostering community development. This ambitious endeavor will be undertaken in three planned phases, each targeting specific areas of the building to address business and community needs.

### **Phase One: Immediate Repairs and Workspace Development**

#### Roof Repair and West Side Renovation:

- The initial phase will focus on repairing the leaking roof and renovating the six west side rooms impacted by water damage. This foundational repair is crucial for the building's longevity and functionality.

#### Lower Floor Office Spaces:

- Three distinct office spaces on the lower floor will cater to different business needs. Two are already segmented into smaller work rooms and offices, while the third, an open area, is ideal for cubicles or light manufacturing.
- Once renovated, these spaces will be rented for up to 16 months to start-up businesses with limited revenue. Our objective is not to compete with private office rentals but to nurture entrepreneurs and startups, preparing them to transition into independent retail or commercial spaces.

#### Second Level Co-Working and Multi-Functional Classroom Spaces:

- The second level will feature two dedicated co-working spaces, catering to various professional needs, and a versatile multi-function classroom. This classroom will serve as a hub for workforce development, job skills training, and entrepreneurial classes, supported by educational partners and business centers. Additionally, it will be equipped for distance learning and available for local business associations and event groups.



## **Phase Two: Development of an Event and Conference Center**

### Multipurpose Room Renovation:

- The large room on the east upper level will be transformed into a small conference and exhibition center. This versatile space will be ideal for job fairs, business events, and activities associated with city-sponsored events like the Panguitch Balloon Festival and the Panguitch Quilt Walk.

### Funding Sources:

- Funding will be sought from the Rural County Grant and Hospitality and Tourism Transient Room Tax (TRT) funding opportunities. We have also been working with a historic preservation consultant that is connecting us with preservation grants and Certified Local Government grants. The Old High School building is already included as a contributing resource in the Panguitch national historic district. Essential upgrades include a modern heating and cooling system, a fresh coat of paint, and replacement of the warped wood floor.

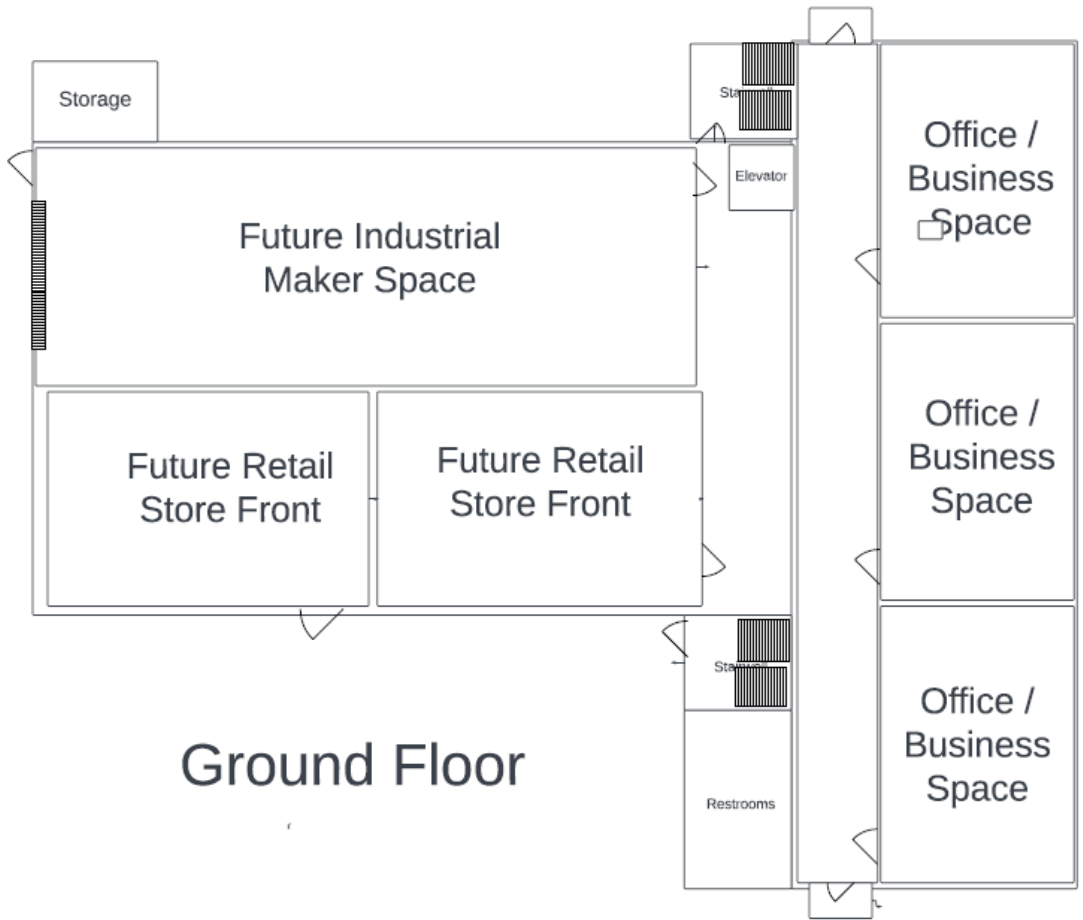
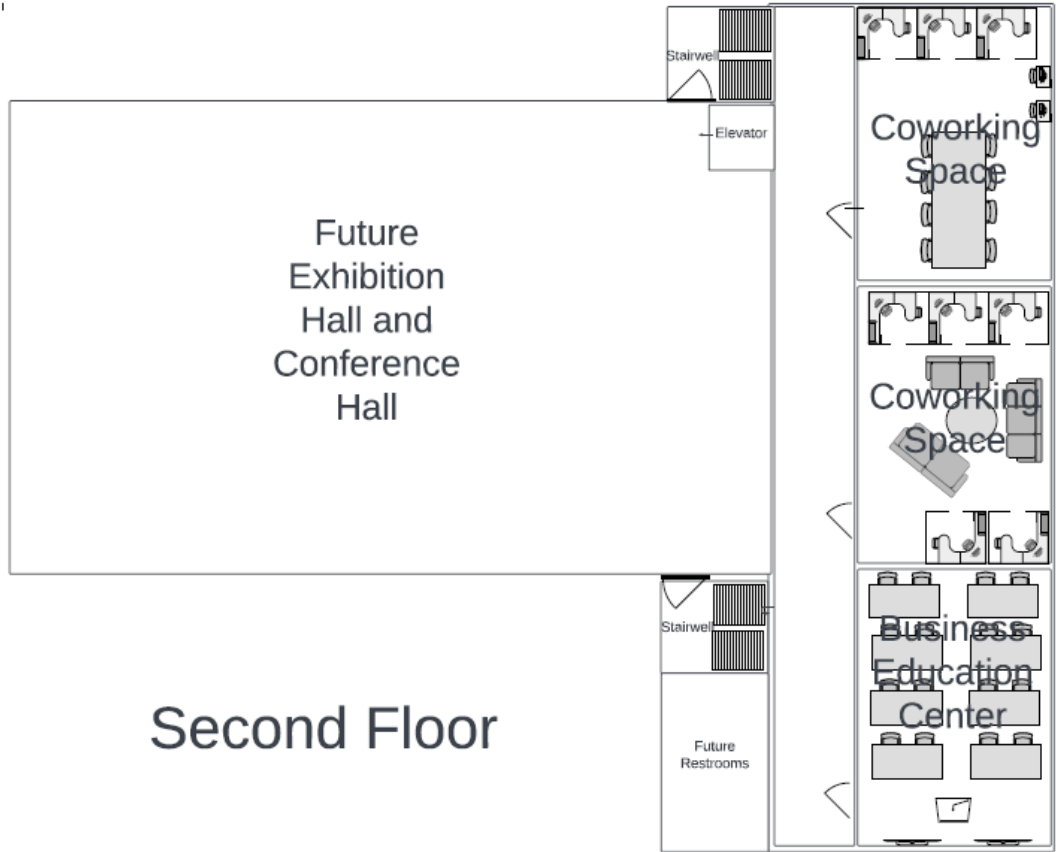
## **Phase Three: Retail and Innovation Center Development**

### East Side Lower Level Retail Revitalization:

- The current sub-standard retail spaces will be revitalized into attractive storefronts for startup retail businesses, complete with necessary heating, cooling, and aesthetic improvements.

### Innovation Center with Maker Equipment:

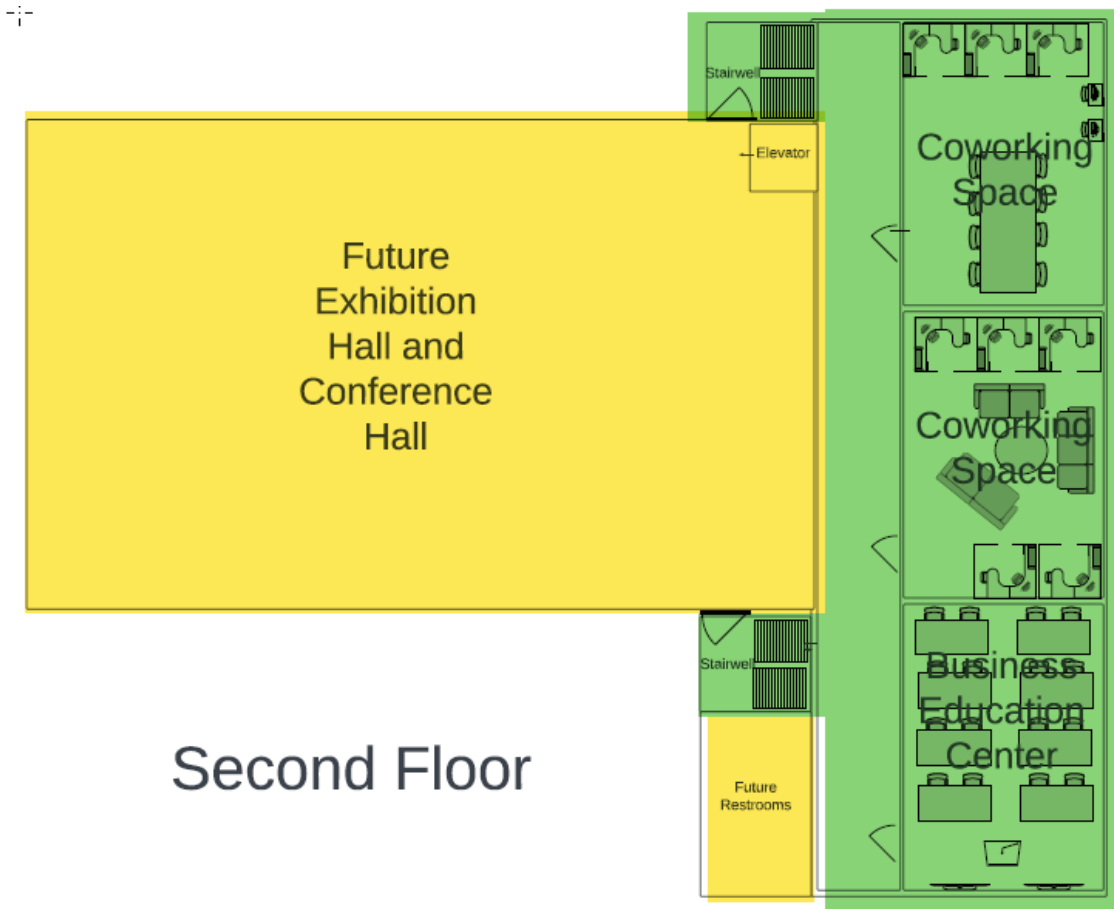
- The large open area, with its convenient roll-up door, will be converted into an innovation center. This space will house equipment like CNC machines, welding tools, and 3D printers, fostering product development for various businesses, including agricultural innovations with global market potential.



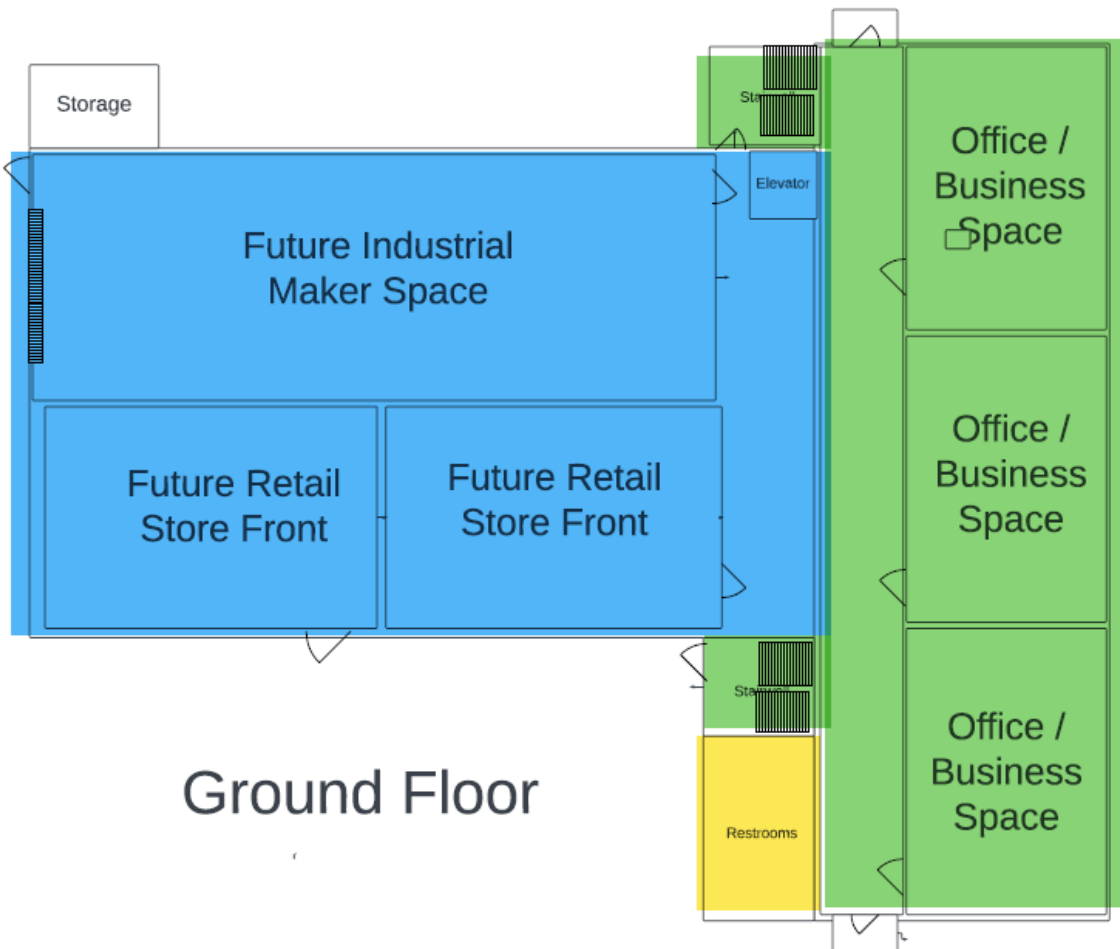
Phase One

Phase Two

Phase Three



Second Floor



Ground Floor



### **III. Scope of Work - Phase One**

Panguitch City, in collaboration with The Governor's Office of Economic Development, proposes the revitalization of the old Panguitch High School building, located at 250 East Center Street to transform it into the Panguitch Business Opportunity Center. This renovation project aims to transform the facility into a vibrant and sustainable business education and opportunity center to benefit the community of Panguitch. The scope of work includes the following key components:

1. Roof Replacement:

- Clean and repair the existing roof structure.
- Address any structural repairs as needed to support the new roof.
- Install a new, durable roofing system to ensure long-term structural integrity.
- Reuse or replace existing roof drains as needed.

2. Carpet Replacement:

- Remove the old carpets in the rooms, hallways, and stairwells.
- Dispose of old materials.
- Install new, durable carpets.

3. Window Replacement and Door additions:

- Remove and dispose of existing windows in the hallways and rooms.
- Install new windows in each of the hallways, stairwells, the six rooms, five windows in each, totaling 34 windows.
- Install doors between openings in two upstairs rooms and two downstairs rooms that were opened in a previous renovation.

4. Ceiling and Exterior Wall Repair:

- Address ceiling damage caused by roof leaks and replace with sheetrock.
- Replace exterior brick material and interior wall material where thru-wall heating unit were removed.
- Patch or fix other interior wall damage.

5. Lighting and Electrical:

- Remove existing light fixtures in all six rooms.
- Replace them with energy-efficient LED lighting fixtures.
- Install network cabling and other new wiring and conduit.

6. HVAC System Replacement:

- Remove through-wall air conditioning units in all rooms.
- Remove gas heating units in each room.
- Replace with energy-efficient mini-split heating and cooling units.
- Implement zoning and temperature controls for individual rooms.

7. Room and Hallway Painting:

- Prepare surfaces by cleaning and patching as necessary.

- Paint all six rooms, hallways and stairwells.

#### 8. Furnishings:

- Furnish the coworking spaces with modern desks, ergonomic office chairs, tables, small meeting areas, cubicle walls, and privacy panels as needed to ensure a conducive working environment.
- Furnish the classrooms with classroom-style nesting tables and stackable chairs.
- Install two large-screen TV displays at the front of the education and meeting room.
- Ensure the provision of high-speed WiFi and networking throughout the building to ensure reliable internet connectivity.

#### 9. Security and Access System

- Install security cameras to ensure safety and security of the space.
- Install door access code panels and locking mechanisms for each room used by multiple occupants.
- Replace all door lock sets in private business spaces.

## IV. Timeline

The project is expected to be completed within 10 months, subject to approval and availability of resources. The timeline will be defined in more detail during the project planning phase.

- |                |   |
|----------------|---|
| January 2024   | - Final Planning and put out bids to contractors  |
| February 2024  | - Award bids  |
| March 2024     | - Interior demolition and debris removal  |
| May 2024       | - Roof removal and repair   |
| July 2024      | - Interior renovation, ceiling repair, painting   |
| August 2024    | - Order interior fixtures and furniture<br>- Install internet, networking, and security   |
| September 2024 | - Install interior fixtures and furniture<br>- Start taking application for renters and short-term Incubating businesses<br>- Line up schedule for business training to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Access to capital</li><li>● Small Business Development Center services</li><li>● Business plan development</li><li>● Accounting</li><li>● Marketing</li><li>● Leadership</li><li>● Social media marketing</li><li>● Small ag business related training</li></ul> |
| October 2024   | - Ribbon cutting and grand opening  |
| January 2025   | - Work to secure funding for Phases II and III  |

## V. Budget

The total budget estimate for the scope of work described above is \$365,930. This includes costs for materials, labor, equipment, permits, and disposal of old materials. All renovation work will be conducted by licensed contractors. Some demolition work and painting will be provided by the county corrections and be overseen by contractors as well as community volunteers. We will engage the community to help where possible to encourage a sense of investment and ownership in the project.

All administrative and operation costs including utilities and custodial services are currently paid by the city and will in the future be paid and maintained by Panguitch City. Our desire is to continue to support the costs of operating the center from proceeds from rentals.

Revenue Type		Amount
Rural Community Opportunity Grant Funds (80%)		\$292,744
Town Matching Funds (20%)		\$73,186
Total Project Revenues		\$365,930
<b>Project Expenses</b>		
Location	Project Task	Amount
<b>Roof</b>	Roof replacement	\$65,468
	Roof wood deck and structure replacement	\$8,700
	Roof 20 yr warranty	\$2,915
	Roof Drain Plumbing	\$3,000
<b>Interior</b>	Electrical and Lighting repair and replacement	\$15,000
	Networking cabling and POE WiFi APs	\$4,000
	HVAC	\$66,275
	Carpet Replacement	\$39,648
	Window Replacement	\$52,375
	Painting	\$22,750
	Ceiling repair	\$4,863

	Brick repair	\$4,500
	(2) Door installation	\$1,300
	Hallway Locker Recessment fill-in	\$1,440
	(15) Vertical Window Blinds	\$1,470
	Waste removal and disposal and labor	\$4,000
	(8) Door Lock hardware	\$472
<b>CoWorking Furniture</b>	Cubicle System 2 - 6 desk system	\$15,600
	Co-working Bench table 6-station	\$2,995
	(18) Office Chairs	\$2,682
	Round Table	\$469
	Meeting area seating	\$3,144
	(10) Vertical Window Blinds	\$978
<b>Classroom Furniture</b>	(14) Classroom nesting tables	\$8,330
	(28) Classroom chairs	\$2,660
	Lectern w/sound	\$1,328
	(2) 85" screens	\$2,798
	(2) Mounting Brackets	\$240
	(5) Blackout Blinds, motorized	\$3,935
<b>Security</b>	Keypad Entry System Internet Connected Alarm.com Entry audit	\$15,605
	Office Exterior Security Camera system	\$6,990
<b>Total Construction and Furnishing Cost</b>		<b>\$365,930</b>

**Summary**

We are a growing community that heavily relies on the seasonal tourism industry. Unfortunately, this dependence has historically led to significant unemployment rates during the off-season, with as many as 16% of our residents left without work each year. Recognizing the need for change, we are committed to nurturing a year-round economy that isn't solely reliant on tourism.

To achieve this goal, we are introducing the Panguitch Business Opportunity Center, a transformative initiative. This center will serve as a hub for fostering entrepreneurship,



offering a physical space for startup businesses to operate, and providing valuable education and skill improvement opportunities for both leaders and workers. Our aim is to empower our community members to diversify our local economy, create new job opportunities, and promote self-sufficiency.

Ultimately, the center's objective is to incubate sustainable, long-term businesses that can eventually expand and establish their own independent locations. This growth will enable them to hire local residents and attract talent from surrounding areas, bolstering the overall strength of our local economy and expanding our tax base.

In essence, the Panguitch Business Opportunity Center is our commitment to breaking free from the constraints of a seasonal economy. It represents our dedication to building a resilient, year-round economy that benefits our entire community, enhancing the quality of life for all our residents.

## **VII. Letters of Support**



55 South Main Street | PO Box 77 | Panguitch, Utah 84759  
Phone: (435) 676-8826 | Fax: (435) 676-8239

November 14, 2023

Governor's Office of Economic Opportunity  
60 East South Temple, Suite 300  
Salt Lake City, Utah 84111-1041

Subject: Rural Communities Opportunity Grant - Panguitch Business Opportunity Center

To whom it may concern,

I am writing this letter to express my wholehearted support for the Rural Communities Opportunity Grant for the Panguitch Business Opportunity Center grant application submitted by Mike Sarles in Panguitch City. I firmly believe that this project has the potential to make a significant positive impact on the local economy and foster entrepreneurial growth in the Panguitch community.

The proposed project, which involves repurposing the old high school building on Center Street into a business center, offers a range of valuable resources and opportunities for aspiring entrepreneurs and local businesses.

The first phase of the project includes the creation of coworking space, a dedicated classroom for in-person business and employment training, and three office spaces for start-up businesses to utilize for up to one year as they establish their ventures. This initial phase alone will provide an environment that nurtures innovation, collaboration, and skill development, all of which are crucial for the success of new businesses.

Furthermore, I commend Panguitch City's vision of utilizing the Panguitch Business Opportunity Center as a hub for hosting in-person events aimed at inviting individuals to learn about various programs and initiatives. Such events will not only raise awareness about the resources available for starting businesses in Panguitch but also create networking opportunities and foster a supportive entrepreneurial ecosystem within the community. By actively encouraging and equipping aspiring entrepreneurs with the necessary knowledge and tools, the Panguitch Business Opportunity Center will undoubtedly contribute to the growth and sustainability of local businesses.

In addition to its immediate impact on start-ups and aspiring entrepreneurs, I appreciate the city's long-term vision for the Business Opportunity Center. The plan to host regular business training opportunities for the community and provide ongoing education for

businesses and individuals aiming to enhance their skills demonstrates a commitment to continuous learning and professional development. Moreover, the city's aspiration to transform the Center into a venue for business leaders' meetings, chamber meetings, and entrepreneurial groups further highlights the potential for it to become a vibrant hub of economic activity, collaboration, and knowledge exchange.

Looking ahead, I strongly urge you to consider awarding the Rural Communities Opportunity Grant to the Panguitch Business Opportunity Center. This project showcases a thoughtful and comprehensive approach to catalyzing economic growth and supporting the local community. By investing in this initiative, you will be enabling Panguitch City to create an environment where entrepreneurship thrives, businesses flourish, and individuals have access to the resources and training necessary to succeed in their ventures.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter. I trust that you will recognize the immense potential of the Panguitch Business Opportunity Center and its positive impact on the rural community. Should you require any further information or have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kaden Figgins". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "K" and "F".

Kaden Figgins

November 13, 2023

Utah Governor's Office of Economic Opportunity  
Center for Rural Development  
60 East South Temple, Suite 300  
Salt Lake City, UT 84111

Dear Center for Rural Development Grant Advisory Committee;

On behalf of the Southern Utah University Small Business Development Center (SBDC), I'm writing this letter in support of the *Panguitch Business Opportunity Center Rural Communities Opportunity Grant* application.

The project involves phases that include converting the old high school building on Center Street in Panguitch into a business center. It consists of adding a coworking space, classroom space for training, development, and business support, as well as business incubator space. The opportunity to support entrepreneurial education as well as provide coworking, training and business incubation will impact the local rural economy in regard to business starts, jobs created, and potential capital infused in Garfield County.

The development of classroom space to provide critical entrepreneurial training and support will be available to entrepreneurs as they start their businesses to help them to be successful. The space could also become an entrepreneurial training, networking, and support space, which could help Garfield County diversify their economy by providing resources to assist entrepreneurs in their business opportunities.

The mission of the Utah Small Business Development Center Network is "improving people's lives through small business success". The SUU SBDC would be the perfect resource partner for the Panguitch Business Opportunity Center as a mentor, partner, and resource provider for those who utilize the space.

I look forward to the continued partnership with the Panguitch City and Garfield County, growing new and existing businesses, and helping to create and retain jobs to improve the rural economy.

Sincerely,



Joni Anderson, Director  
SUU Business Center and Small Business Development Center





510 West 800 South | Cedar City, UT 84720

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Greetings,

I am reaching out on behalf of the Women's Business Center Of Utah (WBCUtah) to extend our support for the grant application for the Panguitch Business Opportunity Center and to express our willingness to partner with them on regular in-person events to provide information to women business owners about our no cost services and resources.

WBCUtah is an entrepreneurial center that supports women entrepreneurs in all 29 counties of Utah. We have two offices, one in Salt Lake City and the other in Cedar City. As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, we are partially funded by a cooperative agreement with the US Small Business Administration and hosted by the Salt Lake Chamber. Our Cedar City office covers the lower 14 southern and eastern counties.

We help women start and grow their small businesses by offering no-cost one-on-one business consultations. Our training includes virtual and in-person group sessions, webinars, a three-level business skills program, an eLearning library, and a free directory of women-owned businesses.

Furthermore, we work closely with Small Business Development Centers, business chambers, and others to ensure that we reach female entrepreneurs. Our team of qualified staff is dedicated to helping women learn and develop business ownership skills through individualized and group support.

WBCUtah strongly believes that establishing a business opportunity center in Panguitch would be an extremely beneficial asset for the community. Small businesses have a significant impact on the communities where they are situated. They play a vital role in driving economic growth, providing diverse products and services, and being adaptable and resilient. WBCUtah is enthusiastic about supporting this initiative.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at [lisa@wbcutah.org](mailto:lisa@wbcutah.org) if you have further questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

*Lisa S. Jensen*

Program Manager

Women's Business Center of Utah



To: GOEO Utah

Re: Rural Communities Opportunity Grant

13 November 2023

I am writing in support of the proposed conversion of the old Panguitch High School building into a business center. There is a tremendous need for office space for startup businesses, facilities for business training, and meeting space to help launch small business enterprises.

Rural communities face significant economic challenges due to the limited availability of resources and career opportunities. Having a facility where people can develop and launch their business concepts is a step in the right direction.

Ample evidence exists in our region regarding the value of such centers. For example, the Innovation Center at Southwest Tech in Cedar City has helped numerous entrepreneurs evaluate their ideas, develop a plan, and get their businesses off the ground. Many of these have already grown to the point where they are hiring more individuals so they can expand their operations.

There are a lot of people with tremendous ideas, however, many of them need guidance to help them through the process. Funding a center like this is an investment in the future of Garfield County and will serve as means to help grow the economy in rural communities throughout the county, provide greater opportunities for locals, and allow those living in the area to earn a decent living.

Please approve the grant funding for Panguitch City. This type of facility is greatly needed and will serve the county well and help grow the local economy.

Please feel free to give me a call if you have questions.

Respectfully,

Christopher McCormick  
President & CEO



Dear Review Committee,

I am writing to express my support for the Panguitch Business Opportunity Center project, currently under consideration for funding through the Rural Communities Opportunity Grant from GOEO. I am Callie Ward, the Utah State University (USU) Extension faculty for the Home and Community department. My role is to help individuals and families in Garfield County meet their diverse challenges and share the information needed to cultivate health and wellness, build strong relationships, manage finances, deal with an emergency, and manage resources.

The outlined objectives of the project, particularly the revitalization of the old high school building into a dynamic business center, are commendable. The proposed multi-phased approach, with its initial focus on creating coworking space, a dedicated classroom for business and employment training, and office spaces for start-up businesses, reflects a comprehensive strategy for fostering entrepreneurship in the Panguitch community.

The emphasis on supporting start-up businesses aligns with the broader goal of stimulating our local economy. By offering accessible training, information, and resources, the Panguitch Business Opportunity Center has the potential to empower aspiring entrepreneurs and contribute significantly to the economic landscape of the region. This project will continue our strong partnership with USU Extension and Panguitch City to address these needs within the community.

Furthermore, the vision for the center to evolve into a hub for business leaders, chamber meetings, and entrepreneurial groups demonstrates a forward-thinking approach to community development. Incorporating future phases, including a conference/meeting hall, retail storefronts for new businesses, and an industrial maker space, adds depth to the project and underscores its commitment to long-term sustainability and innovation.

I appreciate the proactive efforts of the Panguitch City team in spearheading this initiative and recognizing the positive impact it could have on both local businesses and the community at large. To continue helping the Panguitch community, I am prepared to provide educational outreach and support in addition to being a liaison to additional resources through the University.

Please feel free to reach out if you require any additional information or if there are specific points you would like me to address in the letter. I look forward to seeing the positive outcomes that this project may bring to Panguitch.

Thank you for considering my support for this worthwhile endeavor.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Callie Ward'.

Callie Ward

Assistant Professor | Home and Community Department  
Utah State University Extension







**Rural Online Initiative**  
**UtahStateUniversity.**

Nov. 13, 2023

Attn: Rural Communities Opportunity Grant Committee

RE: Panguitch Business Opportunity Center

Dear Members of the Grant Review Committee,

I am pleased to offer our support for an instructional center for the Panguitch Business Opportunity Center in Panguitch City, Garfield County, Utah. The Rural Online Initiative (ROI) offers online courses through Utah State University where graduates learn remote work skills and can become certified as a remote work professional or a remote work leader.

The Certified Remote Work Professional and Certified Remote Work Leader certificate courses are just two of the online courses Utah State University's Rural Online Initiative (ROI) can offer to end-users through the Panguitch Business Opportunity Center. In addition to these courses, the ROI program offers the Certified Remote Sales Professional course, which focuses on skills pertinent to remote sales. Such roles are not only well-compensated but also often remote, making them highly suitable for Panguitch's citizens. We also offer a program for businesses desiring to create or expand their online presence in eCommerce, leading to the creation of new jobs to meet the increased demand for products, thus contributing to the economic growth of our community.

The ROI program features a series of virtual workshops on various aspects of remote working. These sessions, which include insights from professional guest speakers, remote-work employers, and ROI graduates, will be broadcast and accessible at the Panguitch Business Opportunity Center. This initiative caters to both residents and aspiring entrepreneurs. We are also developing skills courses to assist individuals who lack the necessary computer skills for remote work, thereby broadening the pool of eligible remote workers.

Garfield County experiences significant seasonal employment fluctuations, with unemployment rates from October to April often doubling the state average. As of September 2023, the unemployment rate in the county stood at 5.9%, in contrast to Utah's average of 2.6% (source: <https://jobs.utah.gov/wi/insights/county/garfield.html>).

Given the limited financial resources of the city, this project is pivotal for diversifying and sustaining the local economy. We urge you to consider this project favorably, recognizing the urgent need for equipment and resources that will empower our community members with technological skills. These skills are essential not only for immediate employment opportunities but also for ensuring long-term economic stability and growth in our towns. The alignment of this grant's objectives with the ROI program's mission further underscores the potential for successful partnership.

Sincerely,

Dominic Bria, Psy.D.

Associate Program Director, Rural Online Initiative



Teresa Wood  
Beaver/Garfield County Children's Justice Center  
PO Box 890 250 E Center  
Panguitch, UT 84767  
twood@beaver.utah.gov  
435-421-2974  
11/15/2023

Dear Rural Communities Opportunity Grant Advisory Committee,

I am writing this letter to express my support for the grant application submitted by Panguitch City for the restoration of the Old High School Building in Panguitch Utah for use to encourage economic growth in a rural area at the Panguitch Business Opportunity Center. The importance of this project cannot be overstated, as it aligns perfectly with our shared commitment to fostering economic development, supporting entrepreneurship, and preserving our community's rich historical heritage and continuing to provide important services to children and families.

The proposed project is a testament to the Governor's Office of Economic Opportunity's dedication to rural community growth and sustainability. Transforming this building into a Business Opportunity Center will not only breathe new life into a historic landmark but also create an environment that nurtures innovation and supports the growth of local businesses and workforce.

Here are some key reasons why I believe funding this project is crucial:

**Economic Impact:** The restoration of the building will stimulate economic growth by providing a hub for emerging businesses. The Business Opportunity Century will create jobs, attract new talent, and contribute to the overall economic vitality of our community.

**Entrepreneurial Support:** The incubation center will offer valuable resources, mentorship, and networking opportunities for aspiring entrepreneurs. By providing a supportive ecosystem, it will empower individuals to turn their innovative ideas into successful businesses, ultimately strengthening our local economy.

**Historical Preservation:** The Old High School building holds significant historical value for our community. Preserving and repurposing this landmark not only honors our past but also ensures that future generations can appreciate the architectural and cultural heritage that defines our community. Without this grant the community risks losing this beautiful and historic building forever.



Community Engagement: The restoration project will engage the community in a shared vision for the future. By involving local residents, businesses, and non-profit organizations, Governor's Office of Economic Opportunity is fostering a sense of community pride and ownership in the revitalization of this building. Restoration of this building will help ensure that the Children's Justice Center, which provides important advocacy services, and a multidisciplinary team, to support children who are victims of abuse, will continue to have a place in the community.

In closing, I wholeheartedly endorse Panguitch City's grant application for the restoration of the Historic Old Panguitch High School building as a Business Opportunity Center. The positive impact of this project will extend far beyond its physical boundaries, contributing to the long-term prosperity and vibrancy of our community.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I am confident that supporting this project aligns with your organization's goals and values. If you require any additional information or clarification, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Teresa Wood

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Teresa Wood". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Executive Director

Beaver/Garfield Children's Justice Center

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