



**Regional Youth Hangout
MEMORANDUM**

Title: Approval for Regional Support of a Youth Hangout

To: Mayor and Town Council

Meeting Date: August 15, 2024

Submitted By: Dawn Katz, Tri-County Health Network, Communities That Care Manager
Zoe Dohnal, Town of Telluride, Acting Town Manager

Attachments: Exhibit A: TCHN/CTC Proposed Shed Budget
Exhibit B: Trio Article Advocating for a Safe Space for their Peers

Introduction:

Following discussions from the June 20th Mountain Village Town Council meeting, at the July 18th meeting, Mountain Village staff were directed asked to work with Communities That Care (CTC) and the Town of Telluride to gather and present additional information necessary for considering approval to further participate in the regional funding of the capital and operational costs for a regional Youth Hangout space.

CTC, a non-profit under the Tri-County Health Network, aims to create a healthy, safe, and pro-social environment for Telluride’s youth using prevention science. The CTC Club brings together diverse young voices to advocate for a healthy community by establishing safe, inclusive, and substance-free spaces. Recognizing the need for environments that welcome youth-serving non-profits, CTC seeks to expand safe and substance-free programs.

A 2021 survey conducted by the Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment, the Healthy Kids Colorado Survey, underscores the urgency of this initiative. The Telluride region’s bullying rates are higher than the state average, especially among high school students, females, and LGBT students. Mental health issues, including increased suicidal ideation, have worsened since 2017, particularly among female and Hispanic/Latinx middle school students. Substance use rates for binge drinking, marijuana, and tobacco among high school students significantly exceed state averages.

These findings highlight the critical need for a dedicated youth hangout space to provide a supportive environment that can reduce risk factors and enhance protective factors, fostering a healthier community for Telluride’s youth.

Background:

The need for a youth hangout center in Telluride has deep historical roots. Before 1994, the Quonset Hut, The Underground, and Next Generation provided popular hangout spots for youth. In 1994, Youth Link opened, followed by a skatepark in 2001. Initially thriving with full-time staff and expanded operations, the facility faced significant budget cuts during the 2009 recession, leading to its closure in May 2011. Subsequent petitions and considerations for alternative uses

marked a period of uncertainty. Tri-County/CTC and the region's youth began advocating for a new youth space in 2017, with efforts including a temporary space at TSSC in 2019/2020 that closed due to COVID-19.

In 2020, CTC and regional youth advocacy led to Telluride's consideration of incorporating a 650-square-foot youth hangout space within the Town Park Warming Hut project. However, high bid costs, nearly \$1.35 million above estimates, made this plan impractical, and the Town did not pursue regional funding support or execution of the project. Recognizing the initiative's importance, the Town of Telluride Council directed staff to explore additional options. In 2023, the historic Shed in the Voodoo development project, initially intended to be leased for commercial use, was reconsidered. The Shed offers 700 square feet, located where kids historically hung out and easily accessible by bike, foot, or car, and emerged as an ideal location for a potential youth hangout. The current project will cost 43%, almost a million dollars less, of the bid to construct the Town Park project.

In December 2023, the Town of Telluride engaged regional partners, including the Town of Mountain Village, to discuss a long-term vision and cost-sharing for a regional youth hangout. The Town of Mountain Village and San Miguel County committed an initial \$22,000, demonstrating a collective commitment to creating a youth hangout that serves a broad range of kids from all jurisdictions.

In early 2024, CTC youth club members and other high school students actively contributed to the design of "The Shed," highlighting the community's involvement and reinforcing the need for a dedicated youth hangout center. Their input, guided by CCY architects, provided the initial estimate for tenant improvements. The Town of Telluride is working to refine these numbers, meeting with architects to address the remaining items and finalize the construction documents (CDs). Shaw Construction, the lead contractor for the Voodoo Project, was provided with 90% CDs on July 25th. Staff expects updated numbers from Shaw during the week of August 26th. The ability to utilize engaged contractors for this project allows for greater economies of scale and favorable timelines, ensuring this vital asset is delivered to our youth promptly.

Analysis/Financial Analysis:

The Town of Telluride has contributed the land and financed the total development cost for The Shed, amounting to approximately \$520,000, which includes all pre-construction, construction, and financing expenses. To reduce the debt to \$335,000, the Town provided a \$185,000 subsidy from the capital fund. Additionally, the Town has invested \$35,000 toward design costs for tenant improvements (TI).

Capital Costs: Through working with the students and staff of CTC in 8+ input meetings, the final design by CCY offers 700 square feet of programable space at approximately \$185,000 for the TI. As the Town of Telluride and San Miguel County have contributed \$61,666 each for this required work, Mountain Village is asked also to contribute 1/3 of the approximate cost. As previously mentioned, this ask is earmarking funds for this purpose as Telluride staff look to finalize construction plans within the month. This contribution is provided the facility is used as a youth center for at least 5 years subject to annual evaluation by the regional partners as to the effectiveness of the program. Should the facility cease to operate as a youth center within the 5-year period, the Town of Mountain Village would be reimbursed according to the following schedule:

- Year 1 – 100% of contributed amount
- Year 2 – 80% of contributed amount
- Year 3 – 60 of contributed amount

- Year 4 - 40% of contributed amount
- Year 5 – 20% of contributed amount
- After Year 5 – 0% of contributed amount

Programming: Looking at *Figure 1*, the demographics of Telluride School District from the 2023-2024 school year The Shed will provide programming to middle and high school students from our region.

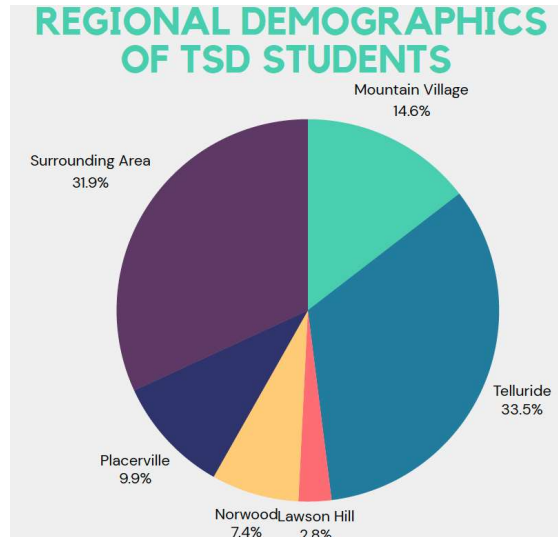


Figure 1: Regional Demographics of Telluride School District

The Shed will be inviting to all as CTC collaborates with 10+ youth-serving non-profits. This would mean that there could be something for everyone. During the school year, youth clubs and organizations will operate their programming after school which allows opportunities for those programs (and/or others) to utilize the space during the day. The facility could be used to offer trainings, coalition meetings, work groups, tutoring, mentorship programs, and MH therapy sessions for youth. on top of other student programming as seen in *Figure 2*.

After the initial program meeting with other youth serving non-profit organizations, they typically host anywhere from 5-25 kids at each event/gathering/meeting or function. Most of the organizations are already well established with a committed group of the area's youth. All have reported growth over the last year which shows that recruitment and

engagement efforts work.



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					01 YOUTHSCAN PROJECT	02
03	04 SMRC PEER ADVOCACY CLUB	05 YOUTH ADVISORY BOARD MEETING	06	07 TRUE NORTH CAREER DEVELOPMENT	08 TRUE NORTH & SMRC XC SKI DAY	09
10	11 SMRC YOUTH SUPPORT GROUP	12 YOUTH ADVISORY BOARD MEETING	13 PHOTOVOICE PROJECT	14 TRUE NORTH CAREER DEVELOPMENT	15 EDITING WORKSHOP WITH LUCAS FOSTER	16 TASP ENABLING ALL
17	18 SMRC PEER ADVOCACY CLUB	19 YOUTH ADVISORY BOARD MEETING	20 TIE DYE SHIRTS WITH CTC	21 TRUE NORTH CAREER DEVELOPMENT	22 THE DEAN'S LIST MOVIE PREMIER	23
24	25 SMRC YOUTH SUPPORT GROUP	26 YOUTH ADVISORY BOARD MEETING	27	28 THANKSGIVING	29 TASP & FREINDS OF YOUTH IN NATURE MEET	30

Figure 2. CTC Sample Programming Calendar

Operational Costs: The annual operating costs for CTC to run the youth hangout center, excluding rent, are approximately \$82,328.20, as detailed in Exhibit A, TCHN Proposed Shed Budget. This amount could potentially be offset through grant funding. Key personnel expenses include the CTC Youth Coordinator (\$28,592), CTC Interns (\$5,200), Spanish Outreach Navigator (\$2,420), Supervision and Reporting (\$6,100), Administrative Services (\$6,200), and Marketing (\$3,350). Operational expenses include Materials/Supplies (\$6,000), Food/Snacks (\$5,000), Cleaning (\$6,500), Landlord-associated expenses and maintenance (\$3,000), and Insurance (\$500). These efforts underscore the commitment to providing a well-supported and engaging environment for the youth in Telluride.

Summary:

To move forward with this project, a request is made to the Town of Mountain Village to contribute approximately \$61,666 to tenant improvements for the regional youth hangout, with the stipulation that the facility is used as a youth center for at least five years subject to annual evaluation by the regional partners as to the effectiveness of the program, or the Town will be reimbursed for this contribution based on the schedule outlined above. As Mountain Village has already dedicated \$22,000 to this project, an additional \$39,666 needs to be allocated from the 2024 budget, pending final construction costs.

Furthermore, we request supporting CTC's future operating costs by sharing a third of the expense, excluding rent, which is approximately \$27,442.73 annually. This contribution will depend on actual costs and supplemental grant funding. In 2026, after a full year of data collection, these equal allocations between Town of Telluride, San Miguel County and Town of Mountain Village will be reanalyzed.

Should Council approve these requests, staff will work with CTC, and the other contributing government entities to form an IGA on operational and programming expectations.

EXHIBIT A
TCHN/CTC Proposed Shed Budget

The Shed Youth Hangout Yearly Expenses 2025

The Shed is a historic structure that sits roughly on the corner of Pacific Street and Willow Street in the town of Telluride. The Town of Telluride (TOT) government has initiated and overseen the process of The Shed's refurbishing so that the historic structure is preserved while also allowing for the internal space to serve as a youth hangout. Tri County Health Network is proposing a partnership with the TOT, San Miguel County, and the Town of Mountain Village to provide year-round programming for youth at the Shed as an extension of the Communities That Care Program (CTC). **This budget page represents funds needed for operating The Shed in 2025.**

Section 1: Organization Information

Organization Name	Tri County Health Network
Person Completing Form	Dawn Katz
Dates of Budget	January 1, 2025- December 31, 2025

Section 2: Revenue

Source of Revenue	Description of Work Funded	Amount Funded
TCHN Grant Funding	TCHN will continue to search for additional revenue sources to fund this project, but does not currently have any funding streams for this part time position in 2025.	
The Rotary Club		
Telluride Bluegrass Festival		
Town of Telluride		\$ 27,449.40
San Miguel County		\$ 27,449.40
Town of Mountain Village	operations funding request	\$ 27,449.40
Total Revenue		\$ 82,348.20

Personnel/Staff Time and Effort

Position	Description of Work	Amount Charged to Contract
CTC Youth Coordinator	This expense supports the CTC Youth Coordinator's position which will be approximately half school and coalition based services (funded by TCHN). The other half of the coordinators wage for all programming and operations of The Shed funded by IG partners.	\$ 28,592.00
CTC Interns	CTC Interns are paid to help with programming and organization of fellow students. 1 intern at \$20/hr x 5 hours/week	\$ 5,200.00
Spanish Outreach Navigator	A TCHN Spanish Outreach Navigator will provide outreach to Spanish-speaking families regarding all aspects of operations. When needed, they will provide staffing for Spanish-speaking youth.	\$ 2,420.00
Supervision and Reporting	Supervision for the CTC staff and oversight of The Shed programming.	\$ 6,100.00
Administrative Services	Finance, Human Resources, Operations	\$ 6,200.00
Marketing	The TCHN Marketing Team will promote all aspects of programming for The Shed through multimedia marketing materials.	\$ 3,350.00
Total Personnel		\$ 51,862.00

Supplies or Operating Expenses

Type of Supply/Operating Expense	Description of Expense	Amount Charged to Contract
Materials/supplies	This will include activity supplies and materials for programming activities.	\$ 6,000.00
Food/snacks	Light food will be provided for activities and on hand for kids who are hungry	\$ 5,000.00
Cleaning	A professional cleaning service will attend to the Shed 1x/wk at \$125/visit to thoroughly clean and disinfect surfaces, floor	\$ 6,500.00
Landlord associated expenses, maintenance and utility	This will include the cost of landlord associated expenses, maintenance, and utilities (electricity,	\$ 3,000.00
Insurance	Liability insurance to cover programming, staff, and program assets.	\$ 500.00
Subscriptions	Disney+\$180, PlayStation \$120, Anthem \$80, Humble Bumble \$150, Canva \$120, Spotify \$200	\$ 1,000.00
Total Supplies		\$ 22,000.00

Subcontracts

Subcontractor Name	Description of Work	Amount Charged to Contract
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Translation/Interpretation Services	A qualified interpreter will provide interpretation for events when needed. The website thewordpoint.com will provide trans	\$	1,000.00
Total Subcontracts		\$	1,000.00
Other Expenses			
Expense	Description of Expense	Amount Charged to Contract	
Indirect Expenses	10% Administrative Overhead (Rent for umbrella organization, Utilities, Technology, Payroll, etc.)	\$	7,486.20
Total Other		\$	7,486.20
Total Income		\$	82,348.20
Total Expenses		\$	82,348.20
Total		\$	-

EXHIBIT B

Trio Article Advocating for a Safe Space for their Peers

The Trio

ADVOCATING FOR A SAFE PLACE FOR THEIR PEERS

WORDS Tanya Ishikawa | IMAGES Matt Kroll

TELLURIDE IS A BEAUTIFUL PLACE THAT ATTRACTS VISITORS YEAR-ROUND. BUT FOR LOCAL YOUTH, IT CAN FEEL A BIT SMALL AT TIMES, ESPECIALLY WHEN IT COMES TO FINDING FREE OR LOW-COST THINGS TO DO THAT INTEREST THEM.



Filling this gap has been the mission of Sophia Watkins, Rhys Chambers, and Margaux Lovely since the summer before their ninth-grade year at Telluride High School. Now, as the 12th graders turn their attention to choosing colleges and majors, they are excited to see their main goal — a new youth center — included in the designs and budget for the Telluride Town Park renovation.

"It's really exciting to be able to see that for the younger generation. That was the goal. We knew we were not going to be able to see it. We knew it wasn't going to be for us," said Lovely.

The seniors' journey to get the youth center approved by the town was supported by and inspired by Communities That Care (CTC), a community-wide coalition of adults and youth that aims to support local kids and reduce adolescent substance use within the Telluride School District. The coalition is organized by Tri-County Health Network and has benefited from the active leadership of all three young women over the years.

The teens founded CTC clubs at the middle and high schools. Then, they drove the effort to advocate for a youth center — acting as the voice of their peers and meeting with school, foundation, and government leaders about the youth center proposal.

"Especially in a town like this where everything is targeted so much at tourists, it's super important to remember and remind kids that they're important and their voices deserve to be heard," said Watkins.

She and her cohorts agree that high schoolers and middle schoolers are at a point in their lives when they are trying to figure out who

they are by experimenting — so the worst thing an adult can do is say, "Don't do this," or "This is bad, so stop." The best approach is to provide alternative choices, Watkins explained.

Data from Colorado's Healthy Kids Colorado Survey confirms that kids in Telluride are faced with some unique risk factors. First, opportunities for positive social activities are limited, and second, adults in the community have positive attitudes toward substance use.

Telluride's summer economy also relies on its party scene — festivals, a superabundance of bars, cannabis and liquor stores. "It's not a bad thing necessarily for the adults and the money, but for the youth population that can be sort of problematic. Not that it's not the case in other places, but it's really right up in your face here, and because of that, access to it is so much easier," Watkins explained.

"ESPECIALLY IN A TOWN LIKE THIS WHERE EVERYTHING IS TARGETED SO MUCH AT TOURISTS, IT'S SUPER IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER AND REMIND KIDS THAT THEY'RE IMPORTANT AND THEIR VOICES DESERVE TO BE HEARD."

— SOPHIA WATKINS

"It's really important to teach kids how to make those decisions. We're not trying to go into the high school and eliminate all substance abuse. That's not realistic at all. But we're hoping that the 20 to 30 kids struggling with that decision will choose another option before something bad happens. A youth center can help with that," Watkins added.

The three young ladies say their friends spend hours "squatting" in coffee shops and restaurants to do homework or hang out with friends, while their parents are working or out socializing. Another common scenario for the youth is hours spent roaming on foot or driving up and down Colorado Avenue from Clark's Market to the mine and back. Telluride doesn't have a bowling alley and the movie theater isn't open as often as theaters in bigger cities.

With a noticeable need to fill, the three young ladies have been persistent in their push for a space where local kids can gather and have fun. The new youth center, which was approved as the trio started their senior year, has been a long time coming. And while the young advocates will be graduating and most likely taking off within the next year, they are confident that the new CTC student leaders will guide the project to completion.

While the process has been a journey, it has taught every student involved how to advocate for what they want and need. "In order to get your point across, you need to be heard, you need to stand out, push, and maybe you'll make people mad along the way, but that's part of actually making a change," said Chambers.

When the youth center is finally built, the project's visionaries want high school upperclassmen to staff it, acting as role models for the middle schoolers. They envision it being open as many hours as possible, providing a safe haven from peer pressure and homes with absentee parents.

Chambers concluded that, "Part of the reason we worked so hard on this project is we believe in this town and we love it here. It's a great place for adults and we know it can be geared more for us. Teens and kids can be a priority, too. We feel fortunate to live here and are trying to make our impact a lasting one." ■

