COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION

SUSTAINABLE GOVERNANCE AND OPERATING OPTIONS FOR A SHARED GREENHOUSE FACILITY

CASE-BASED LESSONS FROM COMPARATIVE GOVERNANCE AND OPERATING MODELS

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PROJECT INTRODUCTION



Fig: Aerial view of the existing agricultural greenhouse facility.

- Former controlled environment cannabis facility
- 13.26-acre property
- ~20,000 sq. ft. of two-story commercial/support facility
- ~21,210 sq. ft. commercial greenhouse; over 100,000 sq. ft. of greenhouse space across the property
- Existing environmental-control, irrigation/fertigation, and support infrastructure
- Potential for agricultural and community reuse

Why Governance & Operations Matter

KNOWN → UNKNOWN → DECISION

What is Known
- Existing greenhouse and support infrastructure
- Agricultural reuse potential
- Potential for broader community benefit

What Remains Uncertain
- Condition & adaptability
- Operating & capital costs
- Management & staffing needs
- Sustainable revenue mix

Identify governance and operating models that can support a viable agricultural infrastructure while creating broader community benefit.

Overall Aim & Internship Goals

1. Identify viable governance models
2. Compare operating and funding approaches
3. Assess community participation pathways
4. Translate evidence into pathways for further consideration

HOW DOES THIS APPLY TO YOUR EDUCATION

Comparative research	→ Case-study logic applied to a real local policy decision
Qualitative analysis	→ Interview evidence translated into cross-case findings
Mixed evidence	→ Interviews + financial filings + organizational documents
Applied policy	→ Research converted into practical scenarios and next steps

WHAT YOU DID

Research Approach

- **Compare** — 6 governance & operating models
- **Gather Evidence** — Secondary research + 3 interviews
- **Analyse** — Cross-case comparison
- **Develop** — 3 illustrative pathways

Six Cases

- **Old Fort** — Institutional stewardship
- **ALBA** — Farmer incubation
- **New Entry** — Training + Food Hub
- **Viva Farms** — Market access
- **Smiley Building** — Multi-tenant leases
- **Fresh Meals On Wheels** — Food + Community

Interview-insight
"Governance needs clear roles and clear decision-making rules."
— New Entry interview

Cases Compared Across

- Governance
- Community Participation
- Funding & Sustainability
- Management
- Education/Workforce development
- Market access

Study Process

The evidence from the six cases was synthesized through cross-case analysis to identify practical lessons for a shared agricultural facility.

3 Interview-informed Cases + 3 Document-based Cases
↓
Cross-Case Analysis
↓
Lessons for a Shared Agricultural Facility

NEXT STEPS

Before selecting a long-term pathway, key assumptions should be tested through feasibility assessment and phased implementation.

- Validate demand
- Establish operating costs
- Assess viable markets
- Identify operating and programming partners
- Define acceptable financial exposure

Phased Approach

Assess	Demand • Costs • Markets • Partners
Pilot & Evaluate	Test demand • Costs • Operations • Tenant/partner performance
Scale	Expand proven uses • Formalize the long-term model

Start with demonstrated demand and proven uses before committing to full-scale redevelopment.

WHAT YOU LEARNED

Five Key Lessons

1. Separate governance from operations
2. Community benefits require capacity
3. Diversify revenue
4. Production space is not enough
5. Develop in phases

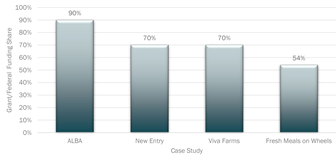
Overall
Successful shared facilities combine professional management, diversified revenue, and community benefit.

Consistent Governance Pattern

Governance/Owner	Mission • strategy • oversight
Professional Management	Operations • utilities • maintenance • programs
Users	Growers • tenants • volunteers • community

Funding Pattern Across Case Studies

Reported Reliance on Grant, Contribution, and Federal Funding Across Selected Case Studies.



Funding pattern across case studies show sustainability means diversified support _ not only participant fees.

Infrastructure Alone Is Not Enough

Production Space → Training → Business Support → Market Access → Independent Enterprise

Community participation can occur through governance, programs, training, volunteering, and partnerships—not necessarily through day-to-day facility management.

Pathways for Further Investigation

Cross-case findings informed three potential pathways for further investigation based on local priorities and feasibility.

	Scenario 1	Scenario 2	Scenario 3
Model	Community-Governed Agricultural Development Corporation	Public–Private Multi-Tenant Greenhouse Campus	Community Food & Innovation Centre
Primary priority	Agricultural entrepreneurship	Commercial performance	Community benefit
Primary users	Incubator growers	Commercial tenants	Community, workforce & agricultural partners
Success measured by	Business development	Revenue & occupancy	Community outcomes
Funding orientation	Grants/support + earned revenue	Primarily lease/tenant revenue	Commercial/program revenue + grants & philanthropy
Expected Investment horizon	Medium-term	Short–medium term	Long-term

These pathways guide further investigation; the appropriate direction depends on local priorities, demand, partnerships, markets, and available capacity.

SCAN TO VIEW THE ILLUSTRATIVE SCENARIOS
One-page project overview