

# What is the Southeast CO Small Business Incubator?

## Southeast Colorado Small Business Incubator (SECO SBI)

### What is it?

The SECO SBI is providing education and vocational training, workforce development certifications, and small business acceleration & incubation. While it will be located at the Fort Lyon campus in Bent County, CO it will also serve the 7-county region around Fort Lyon, commonly referred to as the Lower Arkansas Valley (LAV). The region consists of Baca, Bent, Crowley, Kiowa, Las Animas, Otero, and Prowers counties.

### Vision

We are developing and administering workforce training and certifications, community economic development projects and programs, STEM programs, financing education, computer bookkeeping workshops, and in other ways supporting small businesses within Bent County. We encourage small business development and positive contributions to our community's economy, with the potential expansion of these training opportunities and small business programs into the LAV region. SECO SBI welcomes community collaborations from multiple entities such as community colleges, universities, & apprenticeship programs.

### Who runs it?

SECO SBI is currently in-process establishing the 501(c)3 nonprofit designation, and expected to complete by late Spring 2021. The governing body will be a Board of Directors, Executive Director, and Manager. The current Manager of the development of the workforce development programs & nonprofit operations is Mary Ward. SECO SBI is currently in a mobile/floating capacity, occasionally residing in a McClave, CO office and other offices in the region as needed for training purposes. SBI is primarily hosted in the BCDF office in Las Animas, CO. The Southeast Colorado Small Business Development Center (SBDC) will be hosted by SECO SBI, and its central hub will be located on the Fort Lyon campus. Until offices are complete at Ft Lyon, SBDC will act in a mobile/floating capacity and continue to serve the LAV region.

### Who pays for it?

The SECO SBI is operated by a partnership between DOLA, the Bent County Development Foundation (BCDF), and SBDC. All funding for this nonprofit will come through grants, fundraising, and donations. Currently, the SECO SBI has received \$200,000 through grant funding for workforce development training and \$25,000 for business incubation. The SECO SBI leadership has identified another \$500,000 that will be applied for within the next year to expand this programming. SBDC will bring its own budget, and continue acquiring programming funds, including cash-match funds.

### Where is it located?

The target opening date of the SECO SBI offices at Fort Lyon is Fall 2021, although COVID-19 restrictions & guidelines may continue delaying the opening timeline. Programs will be available between now and Fall of 2021 for residents of the LAV region, specifically Bent County.

### Where can you find more information?

- [www.secosbi.com](http://www.secosbi.com)
- <https://www.facebook.com/SECOSBI1/>
- <https://www.instagram.com/secosbi/>
- <https://www.linkedin.com/company/seco-sbi>

## SECO SBI Support Organizations

### Bent County Development Foundation:

It is the mission of the Bent County Development Foundation (BCDF) to increase general economic development and improve quality of life for existing and future residents of Bent County. BCDF focuses on supporting existing businesses, bringing in new business, and strengthening the economic infrastructure of the community so that every business can thrive.

### BCDF Contact Information:

Sammie George - Director  
[sammie.george@bentcounty.org](mailto:sammie.george@bentcounty.org)  
<https://bentcounty.org/bent-county>

### Department of Local Affairs (DOLA):

Management of Fort Lyon Campus and included buildings owned by the State of Colorado. They will offer cash-match and act as a pass through for SBDC during the SBI final development and opening stages.

### DOLA Contact Information:

Cassy Westmoreland - Program Manager  
[cassy.westmoreland@state.co.us](mailto:cassy.westmoreland@state.co.us)

### Small Business Development Center:

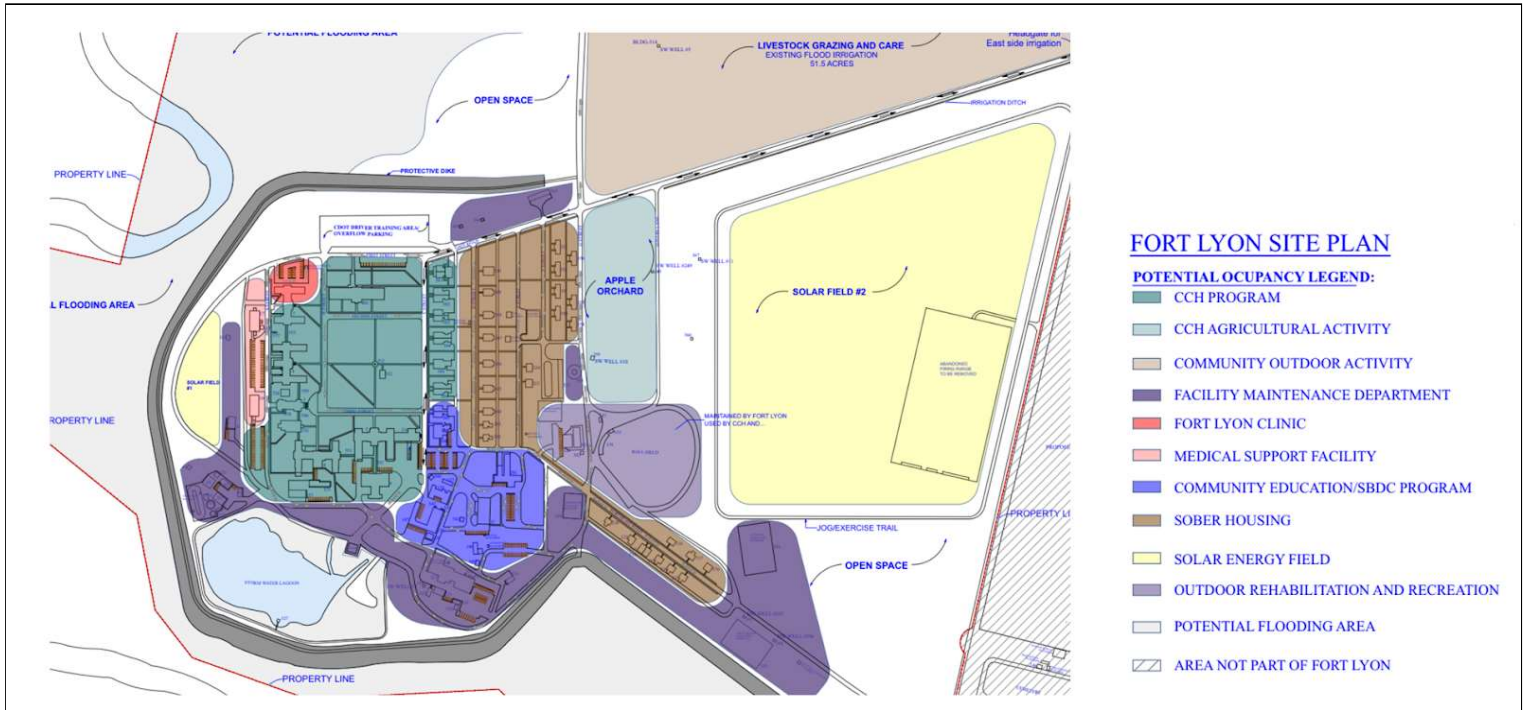
The Southeast Colorado SBDC offers free business consulting and small business education that maximizes economic potential of entrepreneurs within Southeastern Colorado. They will provide free guidance and counseling in all aspects of funding and developing small businesses centralized at the SBI. SBDC will offer onsite guidance to minimize negative risks by helping clients write comprehensive business plans, conduct financial forecasts, strategize marketing tactics, apply for funding, and improve operations.

### SBDC Contact Information:

Mickie Lewis - Regional Director  
[secosbdc.regional.director@gmail.com](mailto:secosbdc.regional.director@gmail.com)  
<https://southeastcosbdc.org/>

## Current Opportunities:

- **EPA EWDJT Grant:** Environmental Workforce Development & Job Training
- **USDA RBDG Grant:** Small Business Accelerator Program
- **EPA grant funding + other funding:** Remediation/ capital improvements to the buildings on the Ft. Lyon campus marked for SECO SBI occupation. See “Community Education/ SBDC” labeled buildings. Goal: Summer-Fall 2021
- **Rural High-Tech Hub:** Data Science certification(s). Collaboration with CU-Denver & SE CO SBDC



*The West-facing side of the Ft. Lyon campus is the top edge of the Ft. Lyon Site Plan. Solar Field #2 is the North-facing side of the campus.*

**SOUTHEAST COLORADO SMALL BUSINESS INCUBATOR (SECO SBI)**

