



BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

District 1 – Cody Davis 970-244-1605

District 2 – Bobbie Daniel 970-244-1604

District 3 – Janet Rowland 970-244-1606

March 1, 2024

Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade
1600 Broadway Ste 2500
Denver CO 80202

To the Tech Hub Review Team:

As the Mesa County Board of Commissioners, we are writing to share support of Colorado Mesa University's (CMU's) application to the Regional Technology and Innovation Hub Grant Program as an anticipated member of the Resilient & Adaptive Cyber Protection of Industrial Control Devices & Systems (RAPIDS) initiative consortia.

As Mesa County Commissioners, we represent the largest population density west of the Rocky Mountains and take great pride in supporting the people who live here. Mesa County sits at the confluence of the Colorado and Gunnison rivers, comprising 68% of the total river volume. Mesa County is the gatekeeper of this national asset and has the raw materials to protect it. In the middle of the twentieth century, Mesa County served as the hub for natural resources related to the nation's nuclear programs. The people who live here pioneered the American way of life, providing power and defense to the most powerful country in the world. Now, Mesa County draws from its roots to rise and protect the backbone of the nation, critical infrastructure.

We are encouraged by the RAPIDS initiative and our consortia's proposal to secure the enablement of water management for the Colorado River as well as establish a rural innovation tech hub to address key regional and national demands. While drought, water shortages, and increasing cyber security concerns have made the region vulnerable to the far-reaching consequences for agricultural productivity and food security, if there are any disruptions to the availability of water we are also faced with the unique opportunity and positioning to use our natural resources, location, and community assets to respond on a broad scale.

The City of Grand Junction and Mesa County have played a leading role in the planning and development of the Western Slope Rural Tech Hub model. From convening meetings to freeing up resources to help make this a reality, our government entities have been our lead champions. The town of Palisade, the city of Fruita, and the Associated Governments of Northwest Colorado have also partnered with us to ensure this is a regional model. It is rare to get so many government officials with a shared vision.

As such, Mesa County commits to support and participate in the RAPID initiative consortia's development of a Tech Hub in the following ways:

- Provide support towards project goals, including introducing opportunities to leverage existing state and local government services as applicable;
- Provide input reflecting the perspective of our organization and the communities we serve during the strategy development and implementation phases of grant implementation; and

- We have an estimated investment of staff time that calculates to approximately \$30,000.00 so far and plan to invest more as needed.

Sincerely,

Bobbie Daniel
Chair

Cody Davis
Commissioner

Janet Rowland
Commissioner