

Letters of Support
City of Cheyenne Climate Pollution Reduction Grant

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OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

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A COMMUNITY OF CHOICE

March 25, 2024

To: Michael S. Regan, Administrator, US Environmental Protection Agency

From: Patrick J. Collins, Mayor, City of Cheyenne

Re: Letter of Commitment for Cheyenne's Climate Pollution Reduction Grant Application to Scale Clean Energy Innovation in Southeast Wyoming

Dear Administrator Regan,

On behalf of the City of Cheyenne, I strongly urge US EPA to fully fund the City's Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) application to advance a sustainable, healthy, and economically vibrant southeast Wyoming. Cheyenne is becoming a regional economic and tech hub with area demand for electricity expected to skyrocket from today's 350 MW to over 1,200 MW by 2030. To help meet this energy growth sustainably, our team has developed scalable, replicable, and innovative solar projects and methane capture for renewable natural gas to reduce emissions and lead the way for others in our region.

As the application details, upon receiving the requested US EPA CPRG funding, the City of Cheyenne is committed to ensuring project success by:

1. Leveraging over 480 acres of city-owned land for hosting solar, including at our municipal landfill, King Ranch, and wastewater treatment plant facilities;
2. Investing ~\$1.5 million to upgrade our anaerobic digestion operations to support the proposed renewable natural gas facility;
3. Reinvesting any cost savings and revenue generated from the CPRG measures into a to-be-created revolving fund to cover their lifetime operations and maintenance costs beyond 2030 and further invest in municipal and other regional clean energy and efficiency projects;
4. Hiring our first Strategic Energy Projects Manager as a full-time staff who we will retain at least 5 years beyond 2030;
5. Leveraging lessons learned from our "cattle-voltaics" project measure to inform near-term scalability and feasibility on the City-owned, 18,800-acre Belvoir Ranch;
6. Submitting our concept paper to the Wyoming Energy Authority's Energy Matching Fund program to seek state investment and support;
7. Strengthening collaboration with our utility, Black Hills Energy, a critical partner to ensuring effective project delivery, the region's sustainability, and community energy programs that benefit those with the greatest energy burdens and need;

8. Creating and enhancing partnerships with our regional educational and workforce development institutions, including, but not limited to, University of Wyoming, Laramie County Community College, and the Colorado Agrivoltaics Learning Center; and,
9. Effectively and earnestly engaging with our community, project neighbors, farmers, ranchers, educators, laborers, and other partners to share the benefits of these pollution reduction efforts for their futures and to ensure that no one is left behind in the project decision-making, design, and implementation.

Given the size of our city and the lack of state or other federal funding sources, US EPA's funding is essential to enabling Cheyenne to demonstrate how Wyoming communities and other smaller cities and towns can reduce emissions with pragmatic, cost-effective, and innovative energy strategies. Despite the swift timeline, this was not an application or set of strategies we developed lightly. In fact, we are excited to share the strategies proposed that we believe advance Cheyenne's goals, Wyoming's all-of-the-above energy strategy, and federal emissions reductions and community benefit goals.

We thank you sincerely for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Patrick J. Collins, Mayor
City of Cheyenne



Cheyenne City Council

2101 O'Neil Avenue | Cheyenne, WY 82001 | 307-637-6357

March 11, 2024

To: Patrick Collins, Mayor, City of Cheyenne

From: Governing Body, City of Cheyenne

Re: Letter of Support for Cheyenne's Climate Pollution Reduction Grant Application to Scale Clean Energy Innovation in Southeast Wyoming

Dear Mayor Collins,

As the Governing Body of the City of Cheyenne, we strongly support the City's EPA Climate Pollution Reduction Grant application to lead the way for other Wyoming communities by strategically reducing emissions with innovative solar projects and methane capture for renewable natural gas.

We remain committed to leading by example to ensure our operations are as sustainable as possible, demonstrating good stewardship of taxpayer and federal funds. This application aligns with our goal, set in a 2024 work session to explore the potential of solar as a solution to address environmental concerns and promote renewable energy sources, advance emerging workforce development opportunities, and reduce emissions as part of an all-of-the-above energy strategy.

We are particularly enthusiastic about Cheyenne's intentions to meet rising energy demand with renewable resources and lead the state with innovative siting approaches. Federal investment will help catalyze a clean, competitive region for our industry partners and constituents for decades to come.

US EPA support is critical to enabling Cheyenne to demonstrate how Wyoming communities and other smaller cities and towns can reduce emissions, protect public health, enhance economic growth, and advance innovation. We wholeheartedly encourage you to fully fund Cheyenne's proposal to advance a sustainable, healthy, and economically-vibrant southeast Wyoming.

Thank you for your consideration,

Ken Esquibel
President - Ward III

Dr. Mark Rinne
Vice President - Ward II

Pete Laybourn
Ward I

Scott Roybal
Ward I

Jeff White
Ward I

Bryan Cook
Ward II

Tom Segrave
Ward II

Dr. Michelle Aldrich
Ward III

Richard Johnson
Ward III

The Board of
Laramie County
Commissioners



Brian Lovett
Chairman

Gunnar Malm
Vice-Chairman

Dr. Troy Thompson
Commissioner

Linda Heath
Commissioner

K.N. Buck Holmes
Commissioner

March 14, 2024

To: Patrick Collins, Mayor, City of Cheyenne
From: Laramie County Commissioners
Re: Letter of Support for Cheyenne's Climate Pollution Reduction Grant Application to Scale Clean Energy Innovation in Southeast Wyoming

Dear Mayor Collins,

The Laramie County Commissioners strongly support the City of Cheyenne's EPA Climate Pollution Reduction Grant application to lead the way for other Wyoming communities by strategically reducing emissions with innovative solar projects and methane capture for renewable natural gas.

We are enthusiastic about Cheyenne's intentions to meet rising energy demand with renewable resources and lead the state with innovative siting approaches. Federal investment will help catalyze a clean, competitive region for our industry partners and constituents for decades to come.

US EPA support is critical to enabling Cheyenne to demonstrate how Wyoming communities and other smaller cities and towns can reduce emissions, protect public health, enhance economic growth, and advance innovation. The Laramie County Commissioners wholeheartedly encourage you to fully fund Cheyenne's proposal to advance a sustainable, healthy, and economically vibrant southeast Wyoming.

Thank you for your consideration,

Brian Lovett
Chairman, Laramie County Commissioners



Austin Allen

Business Development Manager
austin.allen@blackhillscorp.com

1302 West 21st Street
Cheyenne, Wyoming

March 26, 2024

Mayor Patrick Collins
City of Cheyenne
2101 O'Neil Ave
Cheyenne, Wyoming 82001

Dear Mayor Collins,

I am writing to indicate that Cheyenne Light, Fuel and Power Company d/b/a Black Hills Energy ("Black Hills Energy") supports the City of Cheyenne's ("City") EPA Climate Pollution Reduction Grant application to secure funding for solar projects and methane capture for renewable natural gas.

At Black Hills Energy our vision is to be the energy partner of choice and our mission is to improve lives with energy. As the retail electric utility provider in and around the City of Cheyenne, Black Hills Energy is committed to working in good faith with the City to develop solutions that meet the City's objectives, while at the same time providing benefits to our customers and company. Black Hills Energy believes the City's proposed projects provide the potential to do all of this, in line with the company's vision and mission.

Thank you for the opportunity to express our indication of support for the City's application. Please reach out with any questions and please keep the company informed regarding the status of funding for these projects.

Austin Allen

Austin Allen
Business Development Manager



Board of Public Utilities

Cheyenne Water and Sewer Departments

2416 Snyder Ave.
Cheyenne, Wyoming 82001
(307) 637-6460
www.cheyennebopu.org

March 18, 2024

To: Patrick Collins, Mayor, City of Cheyenne
From: Matt Buelow, Water Reclamation Manager, City of Cheyenne Board of Public Utilities
Re: Letter of Commitment for Cheyenne's Climate Pollution Reduction Grant Application to Scale Clean Energy Innovation in Southeast Wyoming

Dear Mayor Collins,

The Cheyenne Board of Public Utilities (BOPU) wholeheartedly supports the City of Cheyenne's Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Climate Pollution Reduction Grant application to lead the way for other Wyoming communities by strategically reducing emissions with innovative solar projects and methane capture for renewable natural gas. This aligns with our goals of embracing best practices for municipal operations to reduce emissions from our two wastewater treatment plant operations, using existing city-owned facilities and land to responsibly use taxpayer dollars, and advancing an all-of-the-above energy strategy.

As a partner to the City of Cheyenne, we strongly support this application. Specifically, we are committed to helping this project succeed by:

- Providing access to both our Dry Creek and Crow Creek Water Reclamation Facilities for solar installation and equipment retrofits to support methane capture and use for renewable natural gas; and,
- Putting to use an estimated 32 acres of BOPU/CITY owned land surrounding our facilities for the deployment of solar; and,
- Advising on and managing the implementation of the project, which includes BOPU staff time as well as research and data gathering to inform planning and design.

United States EPA support is critical to enabling Cheyenne to demonstrate how Wyoming communities and other smaller cities and towns can reduce emissions with pragmatic, cost-effective, and innovative energy strategies. BOPU strongly encourages the EPA to fully fund the City's proposal to advance a sustainable, healthy, and economically vibrant southeast Wyoming.

Thank you for your consideration,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Matt Buelow", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Matt Buelow, Water Reclamation Manager
City of Cheyenne Board of Public Utilities

March 8, 2024

Mayor Patrick Collins
City of Cheyenne
2101 O'Neil Ave. Room 301
Cheyenne, WY 82001

Re: Support for Cheyenne's Climate Pollution Reduction Grant Application

Dear Mayor Collins:

On behalf of Cheyenne LEADS, the economic development organization for Cheyenne and Laramie County, I am writing to express my support for the City of Cheyenne's EPA Climate Pollution Reduction Grant application. This grant will provide funding to strategically reduce emissions with innovative solar projects and methane capture for renewable natural gas. As an organization whose focus is attracting new business and retaining companies already located in the community, sustainability through projects such as those proposed by the City of Cheyenne is of great importance.

Cheyenne currently has multiple large data centers in operation and several others that are under construction and in development. As Cheyenne's fastest-advancing industry, data centers are a major driving force in the energy transition to renewables with the goal of limiting the environmental impact of global internet use. This grant will address the rising demand for electricity as Cheyenne attracts more businesses that contribute to economic development and community growth.

US EPA support enables Cheyenne to demonstrate how Wyoming communities can reduce emissions, protect public health, enhance economic growth, and advance innovation. On behalf of Cheyenne LEADS, we encourage your approval of this grant application.

Thank you for your consideration; we are happy to assist with these projects however possible.

Sincerely,



Betsey Hale, CEcD
CEO - Cheyenne LEADS
betseyh@cheyenneleads.org
307-630-2179



Helga Otto Haub School
of Environment and
Natural Resources

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William D.
Ruckelshaus Institute
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March 28, 2024

To: Patrick Collins, Mayor, City of Cheyenne

From: Corrine Noel Knapp, Haub School of Environment & Natural Resources,
University of Wyoming

Melanie Armstrong, Ruckelshaus Institute, University of Wyoming

Re: Letter of Commitment for Cheyenne's Climate Pollution Reduction Grant
Application to Scale Clean Energy Innovation in Southeast Wyoming

Dear Mayor Collins,

As faculty at the University of Wyoming, we offer the following support for the City of Cheyenne's EPA Climate Pollution Reduction Grant application to lead the way for other Wyoming communities by strategically reducing emissions with innovative solar projects and methane capture for renewable natural gas.

This aligns with Dr Corrine Noel Knapp's work to develop the next generation of climate leaders and supporting sustainability efforts in Wyoming. As a partner to the City of Cheyenne, I enthusiastically support this application.

Specifically, I am committed to helping this project succeed by:

- Connecting the effort to students, faculty and researchers at the University of Wyoming
- Advising on the design of the project

US EPA support is critical to enabling Cheyenne to demonstrate how Wyoming communities and other smaller cities and towns can reduce emissions, protect public health, enhance economic growth, and advance innovation.

In 2021, the Ruckelshaus Institute at the University of Wyoming convened a collaborative process to develop recommendations for renewable energy development for consideration by state leadership. Among other actions, these stakeholders recommended "working with the industry to create new opportunities for businesses and host communities," studying "the feasibility of brownfields and previously disturbed areas for development," and "streamlining the existing process for renewable siting and permitting." The work of this collaborative is evidence of the broad support for thoughtful, well-funded approaches to renewable energy in Wyoming. The report on this process can be

found at https://www.uwyo.edu/haub/_files/_docs/ruckelshaus/collaboration/2021-renewable-energy-collaborative.pdf

These objectives are directly in line with the City of Cheyenne's proposed work, and offer evidence of the need for this work in the state of Wyoming. Institutions like the University of Wyoming can be a critical partner to enacting this stakeholder-driven vision across the state, and the Ruckelshaus Institute is positioned to further decision-making around this critical topic.

University of Wyoming wholeheartedly encourages you to fully fund Cheyenne's proposal to advance a sustainable, healthy, and economically vibrant southeast Wyoming.

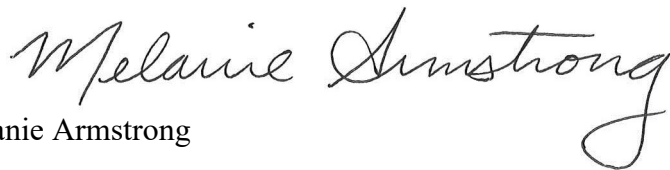
Thank you for your consideration,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Knapp', with a stylized, cursive script.

Dr. Corrine Noel Knapp

Associate Professor, Haub School of Environment & Natural Resources

University of Wyoming

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Melanie Armstrong', in a cursive script.

Dr. Melanie Armstrong

Director, Ruckelshaus Institute

Associate Professor, Haub School of Environment & Natural Resources

University of Wyoming



OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
Dr. Joe Schaffer

March 22, 2024

To: Patrick Collins, Mayor, City of Cheyenne
From: Dr. Joe Schaffer, President at Laramie County Community College
Re: Letter of Commitment for Cheyenne's Climate Pollution Reduction Grant
Application to Scale Clean Energy Innovation in Southeast Wyoming

Dear Mayor Collins,

Laramie County Community College strongly supports the City of Cheyenne's EPA Climate Pollution Reduction Grant application to lead the way for other Wyoming communities by strategically reducing emissions with innovative solar projects and methane capture for renewable natural gas. This aligns with our aspirational value of innovative agility, where we embrace the notion of adaptability that leads to forward-looking and unique actions. By supporting the region's tech industry growth, advancing emerging workforce development opportunities, using existing city-owned land for dual purposes to responsibly use taxpayer dollars, reducing emissions as part of an all-of-the-above energy strategy, and attracting new regional investment with cutting-edge sustainability practices, we can make a difference to pursue opportunities to create better lives, better communities, and a better world for those here today, and for those generations to follow.

As a partner to the City of Cheyenne, we strongly support this application. Specifically, we are committed to helping this project succeed by:

- Support local educational and training opportunities for Cheyenne residents and/or students/workers in this sector and throughout the region

US EPA support is critical to enabling Cheyenne to demonstrate how Wyoming communities and other smaller cities and towns can reduce emissions, protect public health, enhance economic growth, and advance innovation. Laramie County Community College wholeheartedly encourages you to fully fund Cheyenne's proposal to advance a sustainable, healthy, and economically vibrant southeast Wyoming.

Thank you for your consideration,

Dr. Joe Schaffer
President



March 18, 2024

To: Patrick Collins, Mayor, City of Cheyenne
From: Byron Kominek, Executive Director, Colorado Agrivoltaic Learning Center
Re: Letter of Commitment for Cheyenne's Cattle-Voltaic Project and Climate Pollution
Reduction Grant Application to Scale Clean Energy Innovation in Southeast Wyoming

Dear Mayor Collins,

The Colorado Agrivoltaic Learning Center enthusiastically supports the City of Cheyenne's EPA Climate Pollution Reduction Grant application to lead the way for other communities nationwide to embrace agrivoltaics and Cheyenne's proposed "Cattle-Voltaics" to reduce emissions. Our team strongly believes that the future of solar developments will be best served by integrating cattle within solar arrays. The Western US is full of ranchland either owned or leased by generations of ranchers that feed our nation. With the ever-necessary expansion of solar developments across our country, vast areas of the West's ranchland is at risk of having solar deployed on it where the land is seen as a risk (e.g., tall vegetation shading panels, prairie fires) and a cost (i.e. needing to mow and spray herbicides) instead of an asset. Cattle-Voltaics, as the City of Cheyenne proposes in its application, can be the way of the future with grant support from the US EPA.

The Colorado Agrivoltaic Learning Center at Jack's Solar Garden in Boulder County, Colorado showcases the coupling of agriculture / land stewardship with solar developments to educate and inspire our broader community. Agrivoltaics is the co-location of solar array infrastructure above and around agricultural activities whereby the shade and redistribution of moisture can be used to improve the performance of select crops and livestock. By elevating solar panels higher to enable cattle within solar arrays ultimately supports taller and more diverse vegetation growth, healthier soils, and shade for livestock on ever hotter summer days.

Our nonprofit already offers agrivoltaic workshops at Jack's Solar Garden to share with professionals our best practices and lessons learned from four years of work on our 1.2 MW site. We also provide free online webinars and online guidance documents. We host thousands of people each year for tours and events at Jack's Solar Garden to better educate our community about agrivoltaics. Most recently, we've begun providing consulting services to new solar developments and existing solar arrays to give our clients an opportunity to dive into agrivoltaics for themselves.

We'd be happy to work with the City of Cheyenne as expert educators, practitioners, and agrivoltaic networkers to help improve the proposed Cattle-Voltaics' project's chances of success. I truly hope the US EPA team supports this Cattle-Voltaics project as it would set a new threshold as to what is possible within solar arrays and how our country can best get as much utility out of our land, and our investment dollars, as possible. The Colorado Agrivoltaic Learning Center looks forward to supporting your work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Byron Kominek". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Byron Kominek
Executive Director, Colorado Agrivoltaic Learning Center
byron@coagrivoltaic.org / (970) 344-8066

March 21, 2024

To: Patrick Collins, Mayor, City of Cheyenne
From: Bradley Heins, University of Minnesota
Re: Letter of Commitment for Cheyenne's Climate Pollution Reduction Grant
Application to Scale Clean Energy Innovation in Southeast Wyoming

Dear Mayor Collins,

The University of Minnesota West Central Research and Outreach Center strongly supports the City of Cheyenne's EPA Climate Pollution Reduction Grant application to lead the way for other Wyoming communities by strategically reducing emissions with innovative solar projects and methane capture for renewable natural gas. This aligns with our strategic plan to reduce fossil energy consumption and the carbon footprint within dairy production systems.

As a partner to the City of Cheyenne, enthusiastically support this application. Specifically, we are committed to helping this project succeed by:

- Support local educational and training opportunities for Cheyenne residents and/or students/workers in this sector and throughout the region
- Advising on the design of the project
- Providing staff time, research support, labor, and other in-kind resources

US EPA support is critical to enabling Cheyenne to demonstrate how Wyoming communities and other smaller cities and towns can reduce emissions with innovative energy solutions. The University of Minnesota West Central Research and Outreach Center wholeheartedly encourages you to fully fund Cheyenne's proposal to advance a sustainable, healthy, and economically vibrant southeast Wyoming.

Thank you for your consideration,



Bradley J. Heins
Professor

March 28, 2024

To: Patrick Collins, Mayor, City of Cheyenne
From: Maggie Belanger, K-State Technical Assistance to Brownfields
Re: Letter of Commitment for Cheyenne's US EPA Climate Pollution Reduction
Grant Application to Deploy Landfill Solar in Wyoming

Dear Mayor Collins,

Kansas State University's (KSU) Technical Assistance to Brownfields (TAB) Program commits to provide support to the City of Cheyenne on the proposed landfill solar project that the City of Cheyenne seeks to implement with its US EPA Climate Pollution Reduction Grant application. This would be the first landfill solar project in Wyoming and help demonstrate to communities across the state and country how they can safely and responsibly reuse closed landfill surface areas to host renewable energy.

As a part of US EPA's Technical Assistance to Brownfields program, KSU TAB, along with its partner, Rocky Mountain Institute (RMI), provide technical assistance to communities looking to reuse brownfields for siting renewable energy.

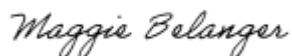
Going forward, KSU TAB commits to providing follow-on technical assistance on this project with staff time and research support. To this end, TAB will support:

- Community education, outreach, and engagement on landfill solar;
- Virtual and local workshop facilitation, as needed, to enhance and clarify understanding necessary for local, state, and utility planning; and,
- Reuse planning for siting renewable energy.

This commitment builds on prior TAB assistance. Since October 2023, the City of Cheyenne participated in our technical assistance cohort, "Preparing for Brownfields Grants with Clean Energy in Mind" and subsequently received direct technical assistance from both KSU TAB and RMI to advance the reuse planning for its landfill solar project.

We wish you success on your proposal and with your landfill solar project goals in general.

Sincerely,



Maggie Belanger
Senior Director & TAB Regional Director (Region 8)