



**RAPID CITY AREA
METROPOLITAN
PLANNING ORGANIZATION**

*300 Sixth Street
Rapid City, SD 57702
605-394-4120*

February 15, 2024

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary
United States Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue Southeast
Washington, DC 20590

Re: City of Rapid City Country Road RAISE Grant Program Application

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

At its February 15, 2024 meeting, the Executive Policy Committee of the Rapid City Area Metropolitan Planning Organization approved a motion to support the City of Rapid City's RAISE Program Grant Application to reconstruct Country Road between Haines Avenue and Elk Vale Road

Country Road provides a critical east-west corridor link across the north side of Rapid City. When Country Road was constructed, it served a rural area of Pennington County, well outside of Rapid City. As Rapid City has grown, this segment of Country Road is now within or adjacent to the City Limits of Rapid City. The road does not meet City street standards, as it is currently a narrow two-lane road with drainage ditches and no shoulder. Additionally, there are significant vertical curve issues that lead to areas of poor sight distance and safety concerns.

No pedestrian or bicycle facilities currently exist on Country Road, forcing the residents of the housing developments in the area, including multiple areas of low-income housing, to travel in the roadway. In 2016, two children riding a tricycle in the roadway were struck by a vehicle, resulting in one fatality and one serious injury.

With the addition of the B-21 Raider Bomber to nearby Ellsworth Air Force Base, additional housing growth is anticipated in the areas served by Country Road. Reconstructing Country Road to current standards and providing bicycle and pedestrian improvements will enhance safety, provide more opportunity for development, and help to serve the B-21 Raider mission and national security.

The Executive Policy Committee, with a recommendation from the Technical Coordinating Committee and the Citizens Advisory Committee, encouraged support of this application. This support is driven by the goal of continuing to expand opportunities for MPO member agencies the chance to provide a safe transportation system within the Rapid City Area Metropolitan Planning Area.

Sincerely,

Mayor Larry Larson, Chairperson
Executive Policy Committee