September 1, 2021

Mayor Steve Allender
City of Rapid City
300 Sixth Street
Rapid City, South Dakota 57701

Dear Mayor Allender,

The West River Behavioral Health Alliance was formed in 2017 to help address behavioral health needs in Western South Dakota. Of primary concern were the high number of individuals being involuntarily committed to inpatient psychiatric care, the revolving door of those in care, and the fact the only state inpatient hospital is in Yankton, SD some 360 miles away from Rapid City.

In 2019, the Alliance commissioned an independent study of behavioral health services in the area which in turn produced 13 recommendations to improve behavioral healthcare. The principal recommendation from the study was the development of a Crisis Stabilization Unit. The proposed Crisis Stabilization Unit will be located at Pennington County’s Care Campus and will house the existing Crisis Care Center (maximum 24 hour stay) along with a new 16-bed Crisis Stabilization Unit (up to 5 days) to serve the acute behavioral health needs in Western South Dakota. We believe this stabilization unit will allow Monument Health’s inpatient psychiatric facility to focus on medium-term care and only individuals with long-term care needs will be transported to the Human Services Center in Yankton.

As with many projects in our community, the success of this project would not be possible without the determination and commitment by multiple partners in the community. Pennington County has donated the land connected to the Care Campus for the site; Behavior Management Systems will be the provider of clinical services at the Stabilization Unit; and during the 2021 Legislative Session, the State of South Dakota approved $4.6 million for the design and construction costs of the facility.

When the development of this project began, the projected cost of the facility in October of 2020 was $4.6 million. At that time, it was believed this would cover the full cost of development and construction. With current construction activity nearly back to pre-pandemic levels, a shortage in skilled labor, material prices on the rise, project delays, and supply...
struggling to keep up with demand, construction costs saw a significant increase in 2021. The increased costs of construction are now estimated at $5.6 million with a 10% construction contingency included in the estimate based on the factors highlighted above.

To mitigate the increased costs, we are respectfully requesting our partners’ assistance in providing contingency funds to meet the anticipated increase in construction costs. We would like to submit a request to the City of Rapid City for the amount of $500,000.00. Bids have been opened and we are approximately $1.6 million short in funding. We have included an overview that was presented to the Legislature with additional information about Crisis Stabilization Unit.

If your organization may be willing to partner with the Alliance in seeing this project come to fruition, we would respectfully request an opportunity to meet with you on the details of such partnership.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Kevin Thom
Sheriff