Hood Tech Corp. Aero Inc. (Hood Aero) is pleased to support Klickitat County's request for Community-Directed Spending to assist in construction of an aviation mechanic training hangar and business park improvements at Columbia Gorge Regional Airport in Dallesport.

This project will provide essential space for the FAA §147 Airframe & Powerplant training program Columbia Gorge Community College (CGCC) started last year. This program is currently housed in an industrial warehouse. Limited space inhibits the college from serving prospective students. This accredited program is an official training partner of Horizon Airlines, which offers a tuition stipend for students. It will help meet the industry projection for 132,000 aviation maintenance technicians in North America by 2040. In addition, by locating the training hangar at Columbia Gorge Regional Airport, students will gain a better appreciation for real-world conditions than is possible at the current warehouse location. If funded, CGCC will use funding to support a range of activities at Hood Aero have indicated to the college that will address current skills and workforce gaps.

This project also will expand the airport business park's capacity to attract private sector aviation-related employment by extending critical underground infrastructure to vacant industrial parcels. With industrial space in short supply in the Columbia Gorge, this business park is a vital resource for economic development.

This request for Community-Directed Spending will augment funding already approved by the U.S. Economic Development Administration. The City of The Dalles and Klickitat County, which have joint ownership of the airport and business park, have budgeted a total of $700,000 as non-federal match for this effort. Cost escalation driven by Covid-related supply chain disruption resulted in higher than anticipated construction costs. This request, if approved, will resolve the challenge and allow this project to move forward.