



February 29, 2024

Postmaster General Louis DeJoy
475 LeEnfant Plaza SW
Washington, D.C. 20260-0004

Re: United States Postal Service (USPS) proposal to relocate the Grand Junction, Colorado Processing and Distribution Facility/Operations to Denver, Colorado.

Dear Postmaster DeJoy,

On behalf of the Associated Governments of Northwest Colorado (AGNC), representing Mesa, Garfield, Moffat, Rio Blanco counties, and their municipalities, our membership writes to express our strong opposition to the United States Postal Service (USPS) proposed plan to relocate the Grand Junction, Colorado Processing and Distribution Facility/Operations to Denver, Colorado.

The primary concern of AGNC and its constituents is the potential reassignment of over 30 jobs. Such a move would result in unacceptable losses for the affected families and have a detrimental impact on the local economy. This contradicts the USPS's mission statement tactics, which emphasize operating in a modern, efficient, and effective manner while minimizing service charges and meeting obligations to employees and stakeholders in a fair manner.

The proposed relocation contradicts the USPS's commitment to serving its dedicated local employees and their families in Grand Junction. We strongly urge you to reconsider this decision and explore alternative solutions that prioritize job preservation, support for the local workforce, and alignment with the organization's mission.

As outlined in the Mesa County Economic Update commissioned by AGNC, the Seasonally Adjusted (SA) unemployment rate in Mesa County increased from 3% in Q3 to 3.4% in Q4, 2023. The Non-Seasonally Adjusted (NSA) rate also rose from 3.1% in Q3 to 3.6% in Q4, 2023. There are growing concerns about signs of a slowdown in the Mesa County labor market, and the departure of USPS jobs would further aggravate the situation. (Perry, 2024)

Our primary concerns are outlined below:

1. **Job Elimination or Downsizing:** AGNC is particularly concerned about the potential elimination or reduction of jobs in Grand Junction. The limited commitment comments from the USPS regarding job retention, coupled with the absence of any mention of relocating local Grand Junction jobs to Denver, are significant points of apprehension for AGNC.
2. **Infrastructure Impact:** The proposed move would significantly increase unnecessary travel on I-70 between Grand Junction and Denver, exacerbating infrastructure needs, particularly in Glenwood Canyon. This places an additional toll on Colorado's Department of Transportation, with costs outweighing the proposed USPS savings.

3. **Delivery Delays:** Anticipated delays exceeding the planned two days for mail delivery are inevitable due to various factors such as weather, mudslides, wildfires, rockslides, snow, and traffic accidents. These delays would compound the consequences, especially for time-sensitive mail items such as paychecks and medications.
4. **Changed Dynamic:** Since the August 2020 Grizzly Creek Fire in Glenwood Canyon, the anticipated travel time and closures on I-70 have evolved. Year-round closures and unpredictable lack of efficiency in mountain pass travel make the proposed relocation less viable, even if it appears financially feasible on paper.
5. **Counter Climate Change Action:** This proposal counters the hard work implemented by the cities and towns on I-70 to combat emissions and air quality with ride-shares and park-and-ride initiatives between Denver and Grand Junction.
6. **Concern with Centralization Workload:** By centralizing mail processing from Cheyenne and North Platte, Nebraska, it is unknown how well the Denver Distribution Facility will handle the increased workload to be able to fulfill its promise of no delayed mail delivery to Grand Junction and rural Colorado.

We respectfully request a comprehensive reevaluation of the proposed relocation, considering its potential long-term impact on local communities, employees, and the efficiency of mail delivery services. Northwest Colorado is struggling with several challenges in retaining its workforce, encompassing issues such as the cost of living, housing challenges, and the decline of energy-related jobs. The suggested relocation could exacerbate the isolation of rural Colorado's outlier communities and continue to threaten the economic well-being of the region.

AGNC remains hopeful that the United States Postal Service can prioritize local jobs and the needs of citizens over mere profit considerations. Your careful consideration of these factors is crucial in ensuring the well-being of our communities and workforce.

Sincerely,



Cody Davis,
Chairman
Associated Governments of
Northwest Colorado



Chris Nichols,
Vice Chairman
Associated Governments of
Northwest Colorado

cc: The Honorable Lauren Boebert
The Honorable John Bennet
The Honorable John Hickenlooper
Governor Jared Polis

Citation: Perry, PHD, N. (2024, January 1). *Mesa County Economic Update*. AGNC.org. Retrieved February 29, 2024, from <https://agnc.org/wp-content/uploads/mesa-county-economic-newsletter-q4-2023.pdf>