

AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

City Council



STAFF

Julia Feder, Natural Areas Conservation and Planning Manager
Tawnya Ernst, Natural Areas Lead Specialist
Carisa Clinton, Grants Administration Manager

SUBJECT

Resolution 2026-105 Supporting an Application for a Great Outdoors Colorado Land Acquisition Grant.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this item is to obtain Council support for Natural Areas to apply for the Great Outdoors Colorado ("GOCO") Land Acquisition Grant.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends adoption of the Resolution.

BACKGROUND / DISCUSSION

The City, in partnership with The Conservation Fund, Colorado Parks and Wildlife ("CPW"), and Larimer County seeks to acquire and permanently protect one of the last large, unprotected properties within the Mountains to Plains Conservation Corridor. Located northwest of Fort Collins, this ranch occupies the geographic and ecological center of one of Colorado's most significant connected conservation landscapes, offering a once-in-a-generation opportunity to complete nearly 40 years of coordinated land conservation. Through complementary ownership by the City and CPW, the project will permanently protect the ranch while creating exceptional opportunities for public access, including hunting, fishing, hiking, wildlife viewing, environmental education, and other compatible outdoor recreation.

CITY FINANCIAL IMPACTS

A completed independent appraisal values the City's purchase of the entire 4,507-acre ranch at \$5,500 per acre for a total land value of \$24,788,500. A separate appraisal of the partially intact mineral estate that will be conveyed with the purchase indicates a value of \$36,100. The City expects to retain approximately 3,000 acres permanently and to convey the remaining acres to The Conservation Fund for eventual transfer to CPW. The GOCO grant request of \$4,000,000, if awarded, will be applied to property acquisition costs.

For the grant application, the City is prepared to commit \$9,000,000 in local matching funds, subject to approval by Council. Larimer County will commit \$5,000,000, subject to approval by the Larimer County Board of County Commissioners. If GOCO awards the Grant to the City, the County, CPW and The Conservation Fund, City staff will ask Council, by separate resolution, to authorize the City to enter into a

grant agreement with GOCO, the County, CPW and The Conservation Fund for the acquisition and provide any other necessary authorization.

BOARD / COMMISSION / COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

None.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

None.

ATTACHMENTS / LINKS

1. Resolution 2026-105