

AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

City Council



STAFF

Kirk Longstein, Sr. Environmental Planner
Joanne Cech, Fiscal Recovery Manager

SUBJECT

First Reading of Ordinance No. 035, 2026, Authorizing Transfers of Appropriations for the Nature-Based Solutions Plan and Stormwater Park Concept Plan Project.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this item is to appropriate funds from the General Fund and the Utilities Stormwater Fund to be used for staff time as the City's 2026 required cost share for the Nature-based Solutions (NbS) Plan and Stormwater Park Concept Plan Project (the Project). The Project is funded by the FEMA BRIC grant awarded to Fort Collins in 2024.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends adoption of the Ordinance on First Reading.

BACKGROUND / DISCUSSION

Staff time supporting this project advances the Council priority to make development predictable, efficient, and cost effective to support sustainable growth and affordability.

The Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, through the Colorado Department of Public Safety (CDPS), awarded the City of Fort Collins \$398,431 of federal funds in 2024 to develop the Project, the outcome of which is referred to as the Nature-based Solutions Policy and Design Guide Project. The award is part of the Federal Emergency Management Administration's Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) 2023 program.

The City has a required in-kind cost share of \$245,641 for this grant that will be met through staff time through the life of the grant funded project, from 2025 through 2027. The City will utilize budgets as appropriated by Council each annual fiscal year associated with existing staff time to meet the required cost share requirement of this grant. The City's required cost share for staff time for 2025 was appropriated in 2025, Ordinance No. 076. No budget fiscal outlays are required to meet the City's in-kind contribution of the grant agreement with the state.

For 2026 the City's required cost share will be met using staff time. This Ordinance is to request Council to transfer \$128,336 of the 2026 appropriations to the General Fund and to transfer \$14,129 of the 2026 appropriations to the Stormwater Fund to the non-lapsing grant Project for staff time. These transfers totaling \$142,465 meet the City's total required cost share for the BRIC award for 2026.

Work on the Project was initiated in 2025 and will continue through 2027.

CITY FINANCIAL IMPACTS

This item transfers \$128,336 and \$14,129 from the 2026 operating (lapsing) budgets within the General Fund and the Stormwater Fund, respectively, to the grant-funded Project for staff time. This serves to support proper tracking of personnel time in meeting the City's required cost share. There are no new fiscal outlays associated with this project.

BOARD / COMMISSION / COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

Staff updated the Affordable Housing Board on November 6, 2025. Board members were generally supportive of the NbS goals but emphasized the need to ensure that NbS standards remain cost-neutral, predictable, and flexible for small infill sites commonly used for affordable housing. The board encouraged alignment with the City's Housing Strategic Plan and Housing First priorities while exploring opportunities for NbS to provide neighborhood co-benefits.

On March 18, 2026, staff presented the Nature-Based Solutions Policy and Design Guide to the Natural Resources Advisory Board. Board members were broadly supportive of the project's goals and expressed enthusiasm for efforts to modernize development standards in alignment with Fort Collins' future density and environmental priorities. The Board raised questions about NbS terminology, construction sequencing, and how environmental principles are applied through the development review process. Members also emphasized the importance of addressing operations and maintenance capacity, including workforce readiness to manage new NbS features over time, and encouraged staff to ensure implementation guidance reflects long-term stewardship alongside design standards.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

The NbS Policy and Design Guide is supported by an advisory group made up of professionals who regularly participate in the development review process, including City staff, engineers, developers, landscape architects, ecologists, and regional partners. The goal of the group is to provide practical insight on how NbS strategies interact with existing development regulations and review procedures, helping identify barriers, test design concepts, and ensure the final Policy and Design Guide is implementable within the City's development review framework.

ATTACHMENTS / LINKS

1. Ordinance No. 076, 2025 (copy)
2. Ordinance No. 035, 2026