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FEMA BRIC Grant

Nature-based Solutions Master Plan

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Environmental Planning

Fort Collins Land Use Code Section 5.6.1 applies if any portion of a development site is within five hundred (500) feet of an area or feature identified as a natural habitat or feature.

In 2024, Environmental Planning reviewed **124 development applications with Natural Habitats and Features.**

The Natural Habitat Buffer Zone inspector provided **more than 100 visits to 32 active development sites** with natural habitats and features.

Environmental Planning: Existing Barriers + Gaps

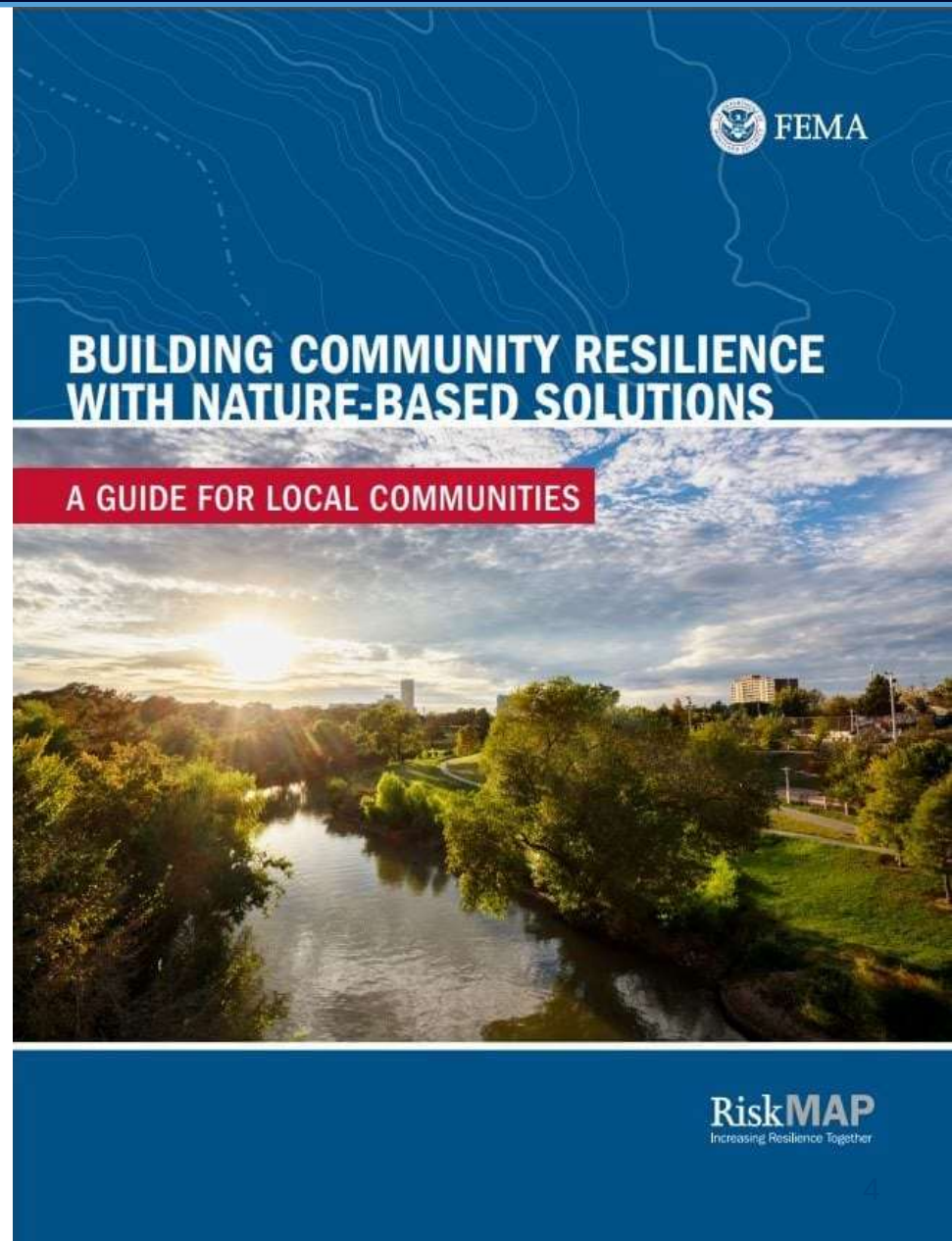
- LUC 5.10.1 lacks sufficient consideration for enhanced ecological function within landscape treatment areas, street trees, and stormwater facilities.

- LUC 5.6.1(D)(3) allows Utilities (e.g., Stormwater) to be located inside the Natural Habitat Buffer Zone but there lacks sufficient guidelines that ensure such improvements are compatible with natural habitat features.

- Stormwater Criteria Appendix B guidelines lack clarity on how to enhance ecological function to the existing (or constructed) habitat characteristics.

Grant Overview

- FY 2023 FEMA BRIC Grant = $398,431
- Subrecipient through the State of Colorado
- City In-Kind contribution = public involvement Staff time
- Grant Agreement Period of Performance: October 2024 – October 2027
- Create a Nature-Based Solutions Master Plan + Site Scale Concept Design



Grant Deliverable: Create a Nature-Based Solutions Master Plan

- **Purpose + Vision**
  The creation of a Nature-Based Solutions Master Plan provides a companion framework to the stormwater design criteria that is focused on using ecological design as a primary tool to manage flood risk.

- **Goals**
  Community-defined environmental planning outcomes.

- **Key Opportunities + Case Stories**
  Focus on enhancing new stormwater infrastructure, natural habitat buffer zones, and habitat connectivity in the urban core.

- **Barriers + Gaps**
  Identify regulatory, design, and administrative constraints limiting adoption of nature-based solutions and where policy updates are needed.

- **Technical Design Guidelines**
  Technical design guidelines offer practical guidance for implementing nature-based solutions through site design, material selection, and construction techniques.

- **Site Scale Concept Design**
  This section presents a conceptual design that integrates flood control, native habitat restoration, and passive recreation. By applying the forthcoming Nature-based Solution design guidelines, the concept will showcase how stormwater infrastructure can deliver ecological function and public benefit on an actual site within the Dry Creek drainage basin.

Grant Outcome: Nature-Based Solutions Master Plan

Evaluate gaps, identify key opportunities and provide policy recommendations to City Council that achieve the following outcomes:

1. **Adapt existing development standards** to align with urban infill and the redevelopment of commercial centers.
2. **Resolve policy conflicts** between engineering design criteria and ecological principles.
3. **Improve predictability** for the development review process.
4. **Enhance environmental planning outcomes** on developments where Natural Habitat Buffer Zones are not present.

Next Steps

1. Request for Proposal – third-party selection
2. Public Involvement
3. City Council Status Update