

AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

City Council



STAFF

Kirk Longstein, Senior Environmental Planner, Community Development and Neighborhood Services
Joanne Cech, Recovery Manager, Grants Administration

SUBJECT

Items Relating to the Nature-Based Solutions Plan and Stormwater Park Concept Plan Project.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A. Resolution 2025-049 Authorizing the Execution of an Intergovernmental Grant Agreement Between the City of Fort Collins and the Colorado Department of Public Safety for the Nature-Based Solutions Plan and Stormwater Park Concept Plan Project.

B. First Reading of Ordinance No. 076, 2025, Making a Supplemental Appropriation of Federal Emergency Management Administration's Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities Program Grant Funds and Authorizing Transfers for the Nature-Based Solutions Plan and Stormwater Park Concept Plan Project.

The purpose of these items is to enable the City to receive and expend federal funds for the Nature-Based Solutions Plan and Stormwater Park Concept Plan Project (Project). The Colorado Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, through the Colorado Department of Public Safety (CDPS), awarded the City of Fort Collins \$398,431 of unanticipated revenue to develop the Project. This award is part of the Federal Emergency Management Administration's (FEMA's) Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) 2023 program, with the \$398,431 awarded to the City being federal funds. The City has a required cost share of \$245,641 that will be met through City staff time. City staff time will be used through the life of the grant funded Project, from 2025 through October 23, 2027. Based on City staff time being part of annual ongoing fund budgets, the City will utilize budgets as appropriated by City Council each annual fiscal year associated with such City staff time to meet the required cost share requirement of this grant.

Grant funds will enable the City in developing plans to support developers who seek to utilize nature-based solutions and natural habitat design standards in their neighborhood developments in Fort Collins. The purpose of this item is to support development of the Project by:

- Appropriating \$398,431 of unanticipated revenue awarded through FEMA's BRIC program;
- Utilizing matching funds in the amount of \$85,378 from existing 2025 appropriations in the Community Development and Neighborhood Services operating budget in the General fund into this grant Project for staff time;
- Utilizing matching funds in the amount of \$11,841 from existing 2025 appropriations in the Stormwater Engineering operating budget in the Stormwater fund into this grant Project for staff time.

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- Utilizing matching funds in the amount of \$5,957 from existing 2025 appropriations in the Communications and Public Involvement operating budget in the General Fund into this grant Project for staff time.

This item authorizes the Mayor to accept the grant funds and to commit the City to comply with the terms and conditions of the intergovernmental grant agreement.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends adoption of the Resolution and the Ordinance on First Reading.

BACKGROUND / DISCUSSION

This Project seeks to find a predictable solution for developers who wish to overlay natural habitat protection zoning standards, nature based landscape designs and naturalized stormwater facilities. The purpose of this Project is to create a comprehensive master plan that integrates Nature-Based Solutions (NbS) to enhance stormwater management at the neighborhood level and protect ecologically significant features identified by the Land Use Code and buffered from development.

The intent of the Project is to find an engineering and landscape design solution that enhances neighborhoods in Fort Collins with a harmonious blend of nature, fostering a sense of place, environmental stewardship, and community well-being. Through the integration of nature-based solutions and natural habitat design standards, staff envision increased community benefit from future development scenarios. Specifically, through:

- Alignment of stormwater management design criteria and natural habitat buffer zones (NHBZs) established by Citywide policy, codes and standards.
- Added value from Utilities infrastructure and enhanced public benefit from developer requirements.
- NbS and NHBZs providing improved water quality, improved stormwater runoff, and recharging groundwater resources.

Council has specifically approved policies, work plan items, Land Use Code updates, stormwater criteria, and priorities that this Department of Homeland Security FEMA BRIC award and the Project are in furtherance of. The Project aligns with the following Council outcome areas and priorities:

- **Economic Health:** Reliable infrastructure for electricity, water, wastewater and flood protection is critical to ensure community resiliency amidst a changing climate;
- **Environmental Health:** Sustain the health of the Cache la Poudre River and regional watersheds while delivering a resilient, economically responsible and high-quality water supply for all Fort Collins residents; and
- **Council Priority:** Protect Community Water Systems in an Integrated Way to Ensure Resilient Water Resources and Healthy Watersheds.

On Friday, April 4, 2025, CDPS received information from FEMA that this BRIC grant is already awarded/obligated by FEMA. The FEMA guidance confirms that some communities are still working toward full execution of the state/sub-recipient grant agreement, which does not impact already awarded federal funds.

CITY FINANCIAL IMPACTS

This item appropriates \$398,431 to support the costs for the *Nature Based Solutions Plan and Stormwater Park Concept Plan Project*, from:

- \$398,431 from unanticipated revenue from the Colorado Department of Public Safety through Department of Homeland Security, FEMA;

Additionally, required cost share in the amount of \$85,378, \$11,841 and \$5,957 have already been appropriated in the 2025 General Fund and 2025 Stormwater Fund, respectively. These funds will be transferred from the 2025 Community Development and Neighborhood Services Department operating budget within the General Fund, the Utilities Stormwater Department operating budget in the Stormwater Fund, and the Communications and Public Involvement operating budget within the General Fund 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.

City staff time will be used in subsequent year 2026. The City will request Council in 2026 to transfer the value of City staff time in 2026 from the operating (lapsing) budget of both the General Fund, and the Stormwater Fund, to the non-lapsing grant Project.

The award under FEMA's BRIC program is a reimbursement type award, meaning General Fund expenses will be reimbursed up to \$398,431.

BOARD / COMMISSION / COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

None.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

The Project team is planning to establish a variety of avenues for community members to share requests, inquiries, concerns and input. This flow of information is most effective when it works both ways and the team is planning to foster this connection at each step.

The approach to public engagement is informed by the methods and best practices created by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2)—their principles also helped to develop the Project's milestones. Project team staff are trained through IAP2, and we constantly research and connect with other communities to learn about new ideas. We work closely with CSU's Center for Public Deliberation, professional trade organizations, non-governmental organizations and community partners to help us better connect with impacted stakeholders. The team is excited to start its public engagement with a presentation to the Land Conservation and Stewardship Board, along with affordable housing providers. Prior to presenting a final deliverable, the Project team will ensure any future recommendations align with a balanced community perspective.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Resolution 2025-049
2. Exhibit A to the Resolution
3. Ordinance No. 076, 2025
4. Presentation