



Legislation Text

File #: Resolution 26-2021, **Version:** 1

Agenda Date: 07/06/2021

Subject:

Resolution 26-2021: Authorizing an amendment to an intergovernmental agreement (IGA) with Mile High Flood District regarding final design, right-of-way acquisition, and construction of drainage and flood control improvements for Jackass Gulch at High Line Canal

Prepared by: Carolyn R Roan, Water Resource Manager

PURPOSE:

Does Council support amending the agreement with Mile High Flood District (MHFD) to contribute additional funds to the design and construction of drainage and flood control improvements along Jackass Gulch, from the High Line Canal to Jamison Way?

PRESENTATIONS:

Staff Presenter(s): N/A
Additional Presenter(s): N/A

SUMMARY:

Jackass Gulch has been actively eroding and sending sediment to the South Platte River for many years. Residents along Jamison Way were increasingly concerned as the creek eroded closer to their homes. South Platte Park was concerned about sediment entering the South Platte River where recent river restoration had occurred, because sediment negatively impacts the cobble substrate and fish habitat in the river. These factors led to a 2017-2018 project to stabilize that reach of the gulch behind Jamison Way.

Significant erosion still occurs upstream of the Jamison Way project. There are approximately 20' tall vertical or overhanging channel banks, fallen fence lines, and active erosion. This continues to generate a significant amount of sediment in flowing water. Sediment (of unnatural amounts) is considered a pollutant in stormwater. It can carry naturally occurring phosphorus which has a regulated Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) in the South Platte River, has negative impacts on fish habitat, and its deposition downstream reduces channel and flood capacity. Residents along the gulch are concerned about the loss of private property due to erosion, and safety risks.

Jackass Gulch had improvements described in a 1990 Master Plan Report by MHFD including stabilization and flood detention in this area. Some of the property is city-owned open space and other portions are in public drainage easement on private property. The City and MHFD are currently updating this master plan and floodplain delineation for Jackass Gulch. This study will better inform design of stabilization of the channel, and locations for ponds that provide flood detention and storm water quality improvement.

An open space park with water engagement and additional trails at this location would provide additional

recreation opportunity, connecting existing elements such as the Mineral Trail, High Line Canal trail, and Writer’s Vista Park. Last year the city received grant funding from Arapahoe County Open Space for design of the city-owned portions of the project. The project is supported by South Suburban Parks and Recreation District, the High Line Canal Conservancy, and surrounding homeowners’ associations.

The city entered into an agreement with Mile High Flood District for design and construction of improvements along Jackass Gulch in 2020 and the design process has begun in conjunction with the Master Plan update. This amendment to the agreement would encumber additional funds from the city and MHFD. It is expected that this will be a multi-year agreement with amendments each year until total funding needs are reached. Partnerships with MHFD’s capital improvement program require a 50% cost match from the local jurisdiction, and in addition, the city anticipates future grants to contribute funding. Total construction and design is estimated at approximately \$4 million, however this will be refined after more design is completed.

PRIOR ACTIONS OR DISCUSSIONS:

City Council approved the agreement with MHFD with Resolution 75-2020. Prior to that action, City Council approved pursuit of Arapahoe County Open Space grant funding and a subsequent county IGA for this project with Resolutions 40-2020 and 56-2020.

ANALYSIS:

Staff Analysis

Stabilization of Jackass Gulch has been planned by staff for many years and has recently become a priority due to rapidly degrading conditions and increased resident concerns. The initial project (along Jamison Way) was a partnership with MHFD in 2017 to address the erosion that was threatening adjacent homes. Continual erosion in the creek, upstream of that 2017 project is a large concern of residents who are losing their property to the erosion. The erosion presents safety risk, being located next to a regional trail (Mineral Trail). There is a water quality concern as excessive sediment reaches downstream to the South Platte River. In addition, there are potential flooding issues located farther downstream that might benefit from flood detention provided with this project.

Council Goal, Objective, and/or Guiding Principle

This project meets 2020 Goal 2-Financial Sustainability, Objectives 3 and 4 by identifying a long-term capital need and identifying funding sources. This project also meets 2020 Goal 3-Good Governance, Objective 3 by leveraging funding assistance and strategic partnerships with Mile High Flood District and Arapahoe County.

Fiscal Impacts

2020 city contribution (grant and Storm Drainage fund)	\$175,000
2020 Mile High Flood District contribution	\$175,000
2021 city contribution (Storm Drainage fund)	\$450,000
2021 Mile High Flood District contribution	\$450,000
Total to date	\$1,250,000

Alternatives

Should this amendment not be authorized by City Council, the project and construction cannot reach completion, and the city would lose the pledged matching funds from Mile High Flood District for 2021. The environmental and safety issues associated with the erosion would continue to worsen.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff has placed a priority on addressing the erosion and flooding concerns along Jackass Gulch and supports this amendment to the agreement with Mile High Flood District to leverage and maximize available funding sources.

PROPOSED MOTION:

I move to approve Resolution 26-2021, authorizing an amendment to the intergovernmental agreement with Mile High Flood District regarding final design, right-of-way acquisition, and construction of drainage and flood control improvements for Jackass Gulch at High Line Canal.