

STAFF REPORT

Date: March 26, 2025

To: Mayor and City Council

Through: Jackie Bryant, City Manager

Subject: Staff Report (For Possible Action): Approval of an Amendment to the Agreement with HDR Engineering Inc. for professional services associated with Federal Emergency Management Agency flood map updates known as “Risk Map” in an amount not to exceed \$197,533. (Sewer Fund) [Ward 2, 6]

From: Mary Horvath, Senior Civil Engineer

Department: Utility Services

Summary:

Staff seeks approval of an amendment to an agreement with HDR Engineering Inc. (HDR) for professional services for the completion of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) flood map updates known as “Risk Map” in an amount not to exceed \$197,533, which would come from available funding in the Sewer Fund. The City of Reno (Reno) and Washoe County (County) originally programmed this effort in February 2024 and completed significant hydrologic and hydraulic modeling. However, as this effort continued, it became clear that additional survey and modeling was needed to complete a precise remapping of the project area floodplain. The County has agreed to reimburse the City of Reno in the amount of \$56,954 for this work (71/29 split). Staff recommends Council approve the amendment to the agreement with HDR. There is a separate, but concurrent Council agenda item, for the interlocal agreement (ILA) with Washoe County for the reimbursement.

Alignment with Strategic Plan:

Public Safety

Infrastructure, Climate Change, and Environmental Sustainability

Previous Council Action:

February 14, 2024 – Council approved the Agreement with HDR for initial work on the Risk Map for \$158,687.00.

February 14, 2024 – Council approved an Interlocal Agreement with Washoe County to reimburse the City for professional services reviewing the FEMA Risk Map update project at

50% of the cost.

Background:

In 2019, FEMA Region IX, in coordination with City staff, began updating flood maps for select areas within Reno and unincorporated Washoe County, through its Strategic Alliance for Risk Reduction (STARR) II Risk Map Program. The proposed remapping in Reno focuses on White's Creek, Thomas Creek, Dry Creek, and Double Diamond Creek.

Reno staff reviewed the proposed changes and the technical foundation (hydrology and hydraulics) and sought additional technical input from our consultant HDR, through an existing on-call agreement. Staff then submitted a request to FEMA to modify their technical approaches to ensure the most accurate and defensible flood maps, particularly for areas near existing buildings. FEMA responded that due to a lack of funding, it would not be able to perform any additional analyses or floodplain mapping changes, and could only modify their analysis and mapping if the City submitted a completed package with requested changes, including all necessary modeling and documentation.

Because the proposed remapping affects areas in both Reno and the County, Reno entered into an ILA with the County and jointly approved a consultant agreement with HDR to perform the additional analyses needed to submit to FEMA. HDR began this work in February 2024, with Reno managing the project and a 50/50 funding split between Reno and the County.

HDR's initial efforts involved reviewing the RiskMAP work performed by FEMA contractors, completing hydrologic analysis for White's, Thomas, and Dry Creeks, collecting relevant data (including survey data for significant hydraulic structures), and building the base terrain and hydraulic models for those creeks. As the project progressed, Reno and HDR staff determined that additional survey data and details were necessary to build an accurate hydraulic model to precisely remap the floodplains. Furthermore, the work product needs to be comprehensive and defensible to gain FEMA approval.

Discussion:

Due to the complexity of the hydrologic and hydraulic models and mapping, the agreement with HDR requires a time extension and additional funding to deliver the necessary work for the FEMA submittal. To meet FEMA's requirements a more detailed model and complete product deliverable is required.

Under the amendment, HDR will:

- Prepare a hydrologic analysis report for FEMA submission.
- Collect missing survey data of hydraulic structures within the project area.

- Refine terrain and hydraulic models to reflect current conditions in newly developed areas.
- Prepare a hydraulic modeling report.
- Produce mapping products.
- Assist Reno with public presentations and notifications.
- Support Reno in addressing FEMA review comments.

This amendment will allow Reno and the County to provide FEMA a more complete model and data to produce accurate map revisions for the community and project area.

Reno and County staff propose that Reno continue managing the agreement with HDR and the additional work be funded at a 71/29 percent split based on remaining work to be completed within each jurisdiction. An amendment to the existing ILA with the County specifying the revised 29% cost share for the additional work, is being provided concurrently for consideration by Council.

The recommended amendment will ensure existing property owners are informed about their flood risk, and future development is able to update FEMA flood maps accurately within the watershed.

Financial Implications:

If approved, Reno is entering into an agreement with HDR for the work as described in an amount not to exceed \$197,533, which would come from available funding in the Sewer Fund. Through a separate ILA, the County has agreed to reimburse Reno the amount of \$56,954 for the Project.

Legal Implications:

Legal review completed for compliance with City procedures and Nevada law.

Recommendation:

Staff recommends Council approve the Amendment to the Agreement with HDR.

Proposed Motion:

I move to approve the Amendment to the Agreement with HDR Engineering Inc. for professional services associated with Federal Emergency Management Agency flood map updates known as “Risk Map” in an amount not to exceed \$197,533 and authorize the Mayor to sign the Amendment to the Agreement.

Attachments:

Amendment HDR Agreement FEMA Flood Risk Map.pdf

