

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 Amended Interlocal Agreement with Washoe County for reimbursement of 29% of the cost of professional services associated with the Federal Emergency Management Agency flood map updates, known as the “Risk Map,” for an amount not to exceed \$56,954 (total contract amount not to exceed \$197,533). [Ward 2, 6]

From: Mary Horvath, Senior Civil Engineer

Department: Utility Services

Summary:

Staff seeks approval of an Interlocal Agreement (ILA) with Washoe County for reimbursement of 29% of the cost for professional services associated with the completion of the remapping of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) flood maps known as “Risk Map”. 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. There is a separate, but concurrent Council agenda item, for an amendment to an agreement with HDR Engineering Inc. (HDR) not to exceed \$197,533 to extend the remapping effort. This item is for approval of an amended ILA with the County to reimburse Reno \$56,954 for this additional work (71/29 Reno/County split). Staff recommends Council approve the Amended Interlocal Agreement with Washoe County for these services, in an amount not to exceed \$56,954.

Alignment with Strategic Plan:

Infrastructure, Climate Change, and Environmental Sustainability
Public Safety

Previous Council Action:

February 14, 2024 - Council approved an agreement with HDR Engineering, Inc to provide professional services reviewing the FEMA Risk Map project in an amount not to exceed \$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:

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 agreement with HDR for the additional work, is being provided concurrently for consideration by Council.

The amended ILA with the County will allow for reimbursement of this work in an amount not to exceed \$56,954.00 (total professional services not to exceed \$197,533). This amendment will allow Reno and the County to provide FEMA a more complete model and data to produce an accurate map revision for the community and project area.

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:

Washoe County has agreed to reimburse the City of Reno in an amount not to exceed \$56,954 (Sewer Fund) for further development updates to the FEMA Risk Map. If approved, the City will enter 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.

Legal Implications:

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

Recommendation:

Staff recommends Council approve the Amended Interlocal Agreement with Washoe County.

Proposed Motion:

I move to approve the Amended Interlocal Agreement with Washoe County to reimburse Reno for professional services associated with Federal Emergency Management Agency flood map updates known as “Risk Map” in an amount not to exceed \$56,954 and authorize the Mayor to sign the Agreement.

Attachments:

Washoe County ILA Amendment Risk Map.pdf