

Grand Valley River Corridor Initiative – River Corridor Master Planning Project

Overview

The Grand Valley River Corridor Initiative (RCI) is currently in its second year of a two-year Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB) Water Plan Grant (June 2023 to May 2025). This grant has funded capacity and facilitation for RCI to run its quarterly Advisory Committee Meetings with local jurisdiction and land management partners, hire and manage contractors, conduct a river flow preference study, a riparian habitat study, and conduct a series of multi-jurisdictional planning workshops. These workshops resulted in a framework for coordinated river corridor planning in Mesa County and an agreement (and letters of support from each elected body) to pursue a joint river corridor planning process. Current funding supporting RCI capacity and facilitation runs through May 2025. The following sections provide an overview of the scope and budget for a propose grant application that would run from June 2025-May 2027.

Table 1 outlines the highlights of RCI’s funding over the past several years.

Table 1. Overview of Grand Valley RCI Funding and Outcomes

Year	Funding Sources	Amount	Outcomes
2020	One Riverfront	\$ 10,000	Initial Stakeholder Engagement and RCI development
2021	Colorado Healthy Rivers Fund, Mighty Arrow, Excel	\$ 30,000	Stakeholder Workshops and Initial Mapping and Report Review
2022	CWCB, Mighty Arrow, WCCF	\$ 32,500	Fluvial Hazard Zone Mapping, Advisory Committee Formation
2023 - 2025	CWCB, CRD	\$218,500	RCI Facilitation, Flow Preferences, Riparian Study, Planning Workshops

2025-2027 RCI Grant Application

The RCI has identified the Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB) Water Plan Grant (due December 1, 2024) to fund this master plan along with ongoing capacity support and floodplain project development from June 2025 to May 2027. RiversEdge West has agreed to submit and manage this grant on behalf of the RCI. This grant requires a match of 25% of which at least 12.5% is cash (the remainder can be in-kind).

The total project cost (required external funding) is \$393,500. 25% of this value is approximately \$98,000. The Grand Valley RCI is requesting that the local jurisdictions provide a combination of cash (\$88,000) and in-kind staff time (\$10,000) to fulfil this match requirement. Note that RCI Core team partners have pledged to provide \$22,500 in in-kind support as well. This in-kind would be applied in addition to the 25% match bringing total match up to 28%.

Task 1 – Project Management and RCI Facilitation

- Continuation of ongoing RCI capacity support
- Facilitation and coordination of the technical advisory committee and RCI Core Team
- RCI outreach events, website updates, engagement material
- Formalization of RCI via MOU or other mechanism

Task 2 – River Corridor Master Plan

- Consultant led process (see detailed scope of work below)
- RiversEdge West and Wash Water Science and Engineering Project Management and Public Engagement support

Task 3 – Multi-benefit Floodplain Project Development

- Consultant led development of priority projects from ongoing riparian study.
- Multi-benefit projects will aim to address flood hazards, river dynamism, habitat restoration, and safe recreational/open space river access.

Table 2. 2025-2027 RCI Grant Application Budget Overview

	Task Budget	Grant Request	In-Kind*	Cash
Task 1	\$ 141,000	\$ 118,500	\$ 22,500	
Task 2	\$ 243,000	\$ 145,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 88,000
Task 3	\$ 42,000	\$ 42,000		
TOTAL	\$ 426,000	\$ 305,500	\$ 32,500	\$ 88,000

* Note: \$10,000 of in-kind is requested from local jurisdictions and \$22,500 is pledged from RCI Core Team members.

Table 3. Breakdown of Requested Match from Jurisdictions

Partner	Percentage	Match Request*		
		Cash	In-Kind	Total
Mesa County	40%	\$ 36,500	\$ 2,500	\$ 39,000
City of Grand Junction	40%	\$ 36,500	\$ 2,500	\$ 39,000
City of Fruita	15%	\$ 12,500	\$ 2,500	\$ 15,000
Town of Palisade	5%	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500	\$ 5,000
TOTAL		\$ 88,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 98,000

* Match requests rounded to nearest \$1,000

Extended Scope of Work

Task 1 – Project Management, RCI Facilitation, Coordination, and Outreach

In partnership with a consultant, the RCI core team will manage the overall project, conduct grant compliance, coordinate and facilitate the Advisory Committee, continue to conduct outreach activities and create and disseminate public facing materials. Finally, the RCI will develop bylaws and pursue formalization via an MOU or other mechanism.

Task 2 – River Corridor Master Plan

The RCI will hire and manage a planning consultant to carry out the development and adoption of a river corridor master plan. Funding under this task would support RCI project management and coordination of public engagement and outreach throughout the process. Jurisdictional partners would be asked to dedicate some regular staff time in participating in the Project Management Team (PMT) and facilitating public engagement/outreach, plan development, and adoption.

Engagement and Outreach: This task will focus on stakeholder and public engagement efforts throughout the planning process. It will include coordinated engagement activities that build community education and support of river health and long-term vision.

Concept and Policy Development: This task will explore and develop policy frameworks and concept design to support the Master Plan vision, covering multiple focus areas. Project work will include the alternatives evaluation and concept development of recreation, mobility, land use, habitat restoration, floodplain management.

Governance and Implementation: This task will outline the governance structure and provide a framework for implementing the master plan, including items such as: regulatory framework, funding strategies, phased implementation plan.

Draft Master Plan Drafting: Based on the results of the concept development and stakeholder feedback, a Draft Master Plan will be developed which will include plan goals and vision, detailed concepts, policies and programs to implement the vision, draft recommendations, implementation framework, public review.

Task 3 - Multi-benefit Floodplain Project Development

The RCI will partner with a restoration consultant to develop up to three priority projects that result from the ongoing riparian study and restoration plan. Projects will aim to address multiple benefits and stakeholder and potentially include flood hazard mitigation, river dynamism, habitat restoration, and safe recreational river and/or open space. Project development will include concept design, cost estimation, and grant writing for project implementation (design bid build).