



Memo

To: City Council

From: Melanie Kilpatrick, Project Manager for the Yampa River Corridor Project

Date: May 27, 2025

Re: Craig River Park – Project Status & Marketing Update

Executive Summary

The second construction season for the instream improvements of the Craig River Park has just completed. Digging It River Works (DIRW) was originally awarded the instream contract as the lowest cost bidder as part of EDA procurement requirements for this federal grant funded project. When DIRW ran into issues late in its first construction season and throughout the second, the City was proactive in adopting measures, including adding significant City and engineering oversight and support, in an effort to help the contractor succeed. Ultimately, the contractor chose to abandon the project rather than come back for a third construction season to finish the last of the work. However, the surety on the bond has proactively and in a collaborative fashion stepped in to stabilize the work during the high-water closure, and we have every confidence that the surety will be ready when the permit season opens back up in August to complete the project. Based on the high quality of work performed to date, the City expects to have a beautiful river park when the project is finished in late 2025. Anson Excavating mobilized on the upland improvements in February and is on track for completion this Fall.

With the project scheduled to be completed this year, City Council, Craig Parks & Recreation, and the Economic Development Advisory Committee have all identified marketing the Craig River Park as a priority task for 2025. I'm pleased to share that an AGNC Mini Grant has been secured in the amount of \$10K for project marketing. The Craig River Park will be promoted as a recreational asset and quality-of-life attraction to assist in recruitment of new business and industry to the area. Active promotion of the Craig River Park additionally supports the City of Craig and our efforts to attract new residents, visitors, commerce and recreation/tourism-related businesses. The City will partner with Marketing Alliance to implement the scope of work associated with the grant. The 50% match will be split between Economic Development and Parks & Recreation.

Background / History

The vision for the Yampa River Corridor Project is to create a cohesive park system along the Yampa River just south of Craig. The cornerstone feature of the Yampa River Corridor Project is the Craig River Park. The Craig River Park involved replacement and reconstruction of the City of Craig's existing degraded municipal water intake diversion dam to include two navigable whitewater recreation drop structures with associated fish passage structures. This critical infrastructure project provides a multitude of benefits including a sustained municipal water supply for the City of Craig. Onshore amenities are also being constructed adjacent to the in-channel water feature to create the beginnings of an integrated river park complex--- the Craig River Park. The implementation of the Yampa River Corridor Project and the Craig River Park largely supports economic stimulus, resilience and diversification for Craig/Moffat County--- a massive win for both partners!

The Yampa River Corridor Project aligns with infrastructure objectives/strategies outlined within the Moffat County Vision 2025 Transition Plan prepared in 2020 by Keystone Policy Center in partnership with El Pomar Northwest Regional Council. The Yampa River Corridor Project fits our long-term Transition Strategy with goals to improve quality of life for locals while attracting more visitors and residents through improved infrastructure and planning. The project additionally aligns with priority community goals and masterplan recommendations outlined in the 2019 City Parks, Recreation, Open Space and Trails Master Plan prepared by Logan Simpson. The Parks & Recreation Master Plan incorporated broad public outreach/engagement feedback sourced through a variety of open houses, online surveys, stakeholder interviews and focus group meetings. Lastly, the project is consistent with strategies and community feedback defined within the 2016 Moffat County Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), 2018 Moffat County & City of Craig Business Opportunity Toolkit, and 2020 Moffat County Tourism Strategic Plan.

Fiscal Impact

BUDGET: The project budget to date is reflected below---

YAMPA RIVER CORRIDOR PROJECT

Yampa River Corridor Project Budget						
Budget Year	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	Total Project
Engineering Expenses	\$ 132,604.00	\$ 155,453.00	\$ 217,613.45	\$ 393,861.89	\$ 322,959.00	\$ 1,222,491.34
Construction Expenses	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 121,401.75	\$ 2,129,157.62	\$ 1,880,931.09	\$ 4,131,490.46
Total Expenses	\$ 132,604.00	\$ 155,453.00	\$ 339,015.20	\$ 2,523,019.51	\$ 2,203,890.09	\$ 5,353,981.80
Engineering Funding	\$ 151,662.68	\$ 73,646.00	\$ 72,691.32	\$ 150,000.00	\$ 103,329.50	\$ 551,329.50
Construction Funding	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 95,000.00	\$ 677,916.00	\$ 4,950,988.00	\$ 5,723,904.00
Total Funding	\$ 151,662.68	\$ 73,646.00	\$ 167,691.32	\$ 827,916.00	\$ 5,054,317.50	\$ 6,275,233.50
	\$ 19,058.68	\$ (81,807.00)	\$ (171,323.88)	\$ (1,695,103.51)	\$ 2,850,427.41	\$ 921,251.70

FUNDING SOURCES: The City of Craig committed up to \$658,656 towards the construction phase of the project with the following match partners and committed contributions---

- EDA \$3,315,342
- Moffat County \$150,000
- Trapper Mine \$30,000
- NWCO Parrotheads \$10,000
- Office of Just Transition \$397,915
- Friends of the Yampa \$65,000
- Yampa River Fund \$50,000
- RLF Open Rivers Fund \$30,000
- CO Housing & Finance Authority \$50,000
- Great Outdoors Colorado \$600,000
- YWG Basin Rountable \$100,000
- CO State WSRF \$100,000

RETURN ON INVESTMENT: Construction of the Yampa River Corridor Project was supported with a grant award from the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) in the amount of \$3.3 million in August 2022. The EDA grant includes 3 project business beneficiaries which accumulatively commit to hiring 83 FTE's and \$10,500,000 in matching

private investment across 9-years post project construction. The economic impact literature on whitewater parks and activity overwhelmingly cites research by K.H. Cordell et al (1990), which established regional economic multipliers of 2.00 and 2.03 for the economic impact of water-based recreation expenditures on local economies. Using the more conservative multiplier, we estimate that these direct hires and new investment will stimulate a total of 249 new jobs and \$31.5 million in new private investment in the community across a range of business sectors.

Community Outreach & Feedback

Spring activities include being onsite with videographer Jason Jaacks, who is capturing project progress and providing marketing support on behalf of funding partner, Resources Legacy Fund. Jason will return to Craig later this month to conduct stakeholder and project beneficiary interviews. Peter and I met with representatives of the Yampa Valley Golf course to discuss flooding impacts and work towards a collaborative solution. I toured the site with the Craig Parks & Recreation team as we collectively prepare to bring this new park asset online. I conducted a site visit and interviewed with Luke Ryan, Co-Director of The Water Desk, to talk about the project and anticipated impacts to be featured in a series of articles being prepared by Luke and his team. Lastly, I provided a project update during the May EDAC meeting.

Attachments

- Craig River Park Branding Sheet
- Business View Magazine, FEB 2025, Building a Thriving Future through Innovation & Community
 - <https://ow.ly/zSTj50V7R8k>

SCAN ME



Prepared By:

Melanie Kilpatrick
Project Manager for the Yampa River Corridor Project

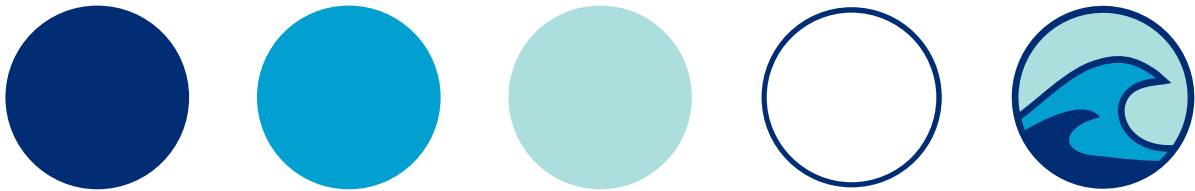


PRIMARY LOGO



VERTICAL LOGO

CRAIG RIVER PARK



PALETTE

RIFT SOFT / MEDIUM

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
0123456789\$%&@(#!?)

MONOLOGUE SANS REGULAR / MEDIUM

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FONTS