



## Colorado Water Conservation Board

# Water Plan

### Water Project Summary

Name of Applicant	Grand Junction, City of	
Name of Water Project	Turf to Native Conversion for Lilac Park	
Grant Request Amount		<b>\$42,500.00</b>
Primary Category		\$42,500.00
<i>Conservation &amp; Land Use Planning</i>		
Total Applicant Match		<b>\$42,500.00</b>
<i>Applicant Cash Match</i>		\$42,500.00
<i>Applicant In-Kind Match</i>		\$0.00
Total Other Sources of Funding		<b>\$0.00</b>
Total Project Cost		<b>\$85,000.00</b>

### Applicant & Grantee Information

Name of Grantee: Grand Junction, City of  
Mailing Address: 250 N. 5th Street Grand Junction CO 81501

Organization Contact: Ken Sherbenou  
Position/Title: Parks & Recreation Director Email: kensh@gjcity.org  
Phone: (970) 254-3881

Grant Management Contact - Alternate: Chloe Lomprey  
Position/Title: Grants Specialist Email: chloe.lomprey@gjcity.org  
Phone: 970-244-1566

### Description of Grantee/Applicant

City of Grand Junction Water Utility

### Type of Eligible Entity

- ☐ Public (Government)
- ☐ Public (District)
- ☒ Public (Municipality)
- ☐ Ditch Company
- ☐ Private Incorporated
- ☐ Private Individual, Partnership, or Sole Proprietor
- ☐ Non-governmental Organization
- ☐ Covered Entity
- ☐ Other

### Category of Water Project

☐

- ☐ Agricultural Projects  
*Developing communications materials that specifically work with and educate the agricultural community on headwater restoration, identifying the state of the science of this type of work to assist agricultural users among others.*
- ☒ Conservation & Land Use Planning  
*Activities and projects that implement long-term strategies for conservation, land use, and drought planning.*
- ☐ Engagement & Innovation Activities  
*Activities and projects that support water education, outreach, and innovation efforts. Please fill out the Supplemental Application on the website.*
- ☐ Watershed Restoration & Recreation  
*Projects that promote watershed health, environmental health, and recreation.*
- ☐ Water Storage & Supply  
*Projects that facilitate the development of additional storage, artificial aquifer recharge, and dredging existing reservoirs to restore the reservoirs' full decreed capacity and Multi-beneficial projects and those projects identified in basin implementation plans to address the water supply and demand gap.*

### Location of Water Project

Latitude	39.077123
Longitude	-108.571885
Lat Long Flag	Precise coordinates: Project coordinates are readily definable and precisely define the location of the project
Water Source	Kannah Creek watershed
Basins	Gunnison; Colorado
Counties	Mesa
Districts	42-Lower Gunnison River

### Water Project Overview

Major Water Use Type	Municipal
Type of Water Project	Construction / Implementation
Scheduled Start Date - Design	10/1/2026
Scheduled Start Date - Construction	11/1/2025
Description	<p>The Turf to Native Conversion for Lilac Park project, located in Grand Junction, will remove water and maintenance intensive Kentucky bluegrass and replace with native grasses. At 3.45 acres, the park has minimal to no use for recreation purposes due to its lack of access, absence of public parking, and location bordered by the high traffic roads of North Avenue and 1st Street. Its primary value lies in its visual appeal and the presence of mature trees.</p> <p>Given these conditions, the site is well suited for conversion to native grasses, that require significantly less water and maintenance. The existing irrigation system will be utilized to support both the new grasses and the existing trees. This project is expected to yield substantial water savings, approximately 1,400,000 of gallons per year (4.3-acre feet), preserving valuable municipal potable water supplies. The project aligns with the Colorado Water Conservation Board Water Plan goals and supports objectives outlined in the City's water conservation and park redevelopment plans.</p>

### Measurable Results

New Storage Created (acre-feet)

New Annual Water Supplies Developed or Conserved (acre-feet), Consumptive or Nonconsumptive  
 Existing Storage Preserved or Enhanced (acre-feet)  
 New Storage Created (acre-feet)  
 Length of Stream Restored or Protected (linear feet)  
 Length of Pipe, Canal Built or Improved (linear feet)  
 \$21,700 Efficiency Savings (dollars/year)  
 4 Efficiency Savings (acre-feet/year)  
 Area of Restored or Preserved Habitat (acres)  
 Quantity of Water Shared through Alternative Transfer Mechanisms or water sharing agreement  
 (acre-feet)  
 Number of Coloradans Impacted by Incorporating Water-Saving Actions into Land Use Planning  
 Number of Coloradans Impacted by Engagement Activity

#### Other

From an operational standpoint, the Parks Department expects to save about 200 labor hours annually on turf maintenance. Maintenance activities such as mowing, clearing sprinkler heads, and optimizing water, will shift to a biweekly schedule.

Irrigation maintenance will continue on a biweekly inspection cycle. However, planned upgrades to the irrigation clock and sprinkler heads will significantly enhance the effectiveness of inspections and audits, improving overall system efficiency.

Irrigation maintenance will continue as it is currently, inspecting the system every two weeks. However, inspections and audits will be vastly improved with irrigation upgrades to the clock and sprinkler heads.

### Water Project Justification

The Lilac Park Water-Wise Landscaping Project supports the 2023 Colorado Water Plan and the Gunnison Basin Implementation Plan (BIP) by advancing municipal water conservation, climate-resilient landscaping, and public education.

By converting 3.45 acres of irrigated bluegrass to native, drought-tolerant vegetation, the project is expected to reduce water and maintenance costs by over \$21,000 annually, with a payback period of 3.9 years. It directly supports:

Colorado Water Plan Action 1.3 – Promote water-wise landscapes,

Action 2.3 – Support conservation-focused land use, and

Action 3.2 – Reduce future supply gaps through water efficiency  
 (Colorado Water Plan, 2023, pp. 114–130.)

The project also advances Gunnison BIP goals related to municipal efficiency, landscape transformation, and drought preparedness, which emphasize reducing high-consumption outdoor water use through strategies like turf replacement and xeric landscaping (Gunnison BIP, 2021, pp. 5-11.)

Lilac Park is one of Grand Junction’s most highly visible public parks, located along North Avenue. Educational signage will be installed on-site to explain the purpose and benefits of water-wise landscaping. This directly supports the Water Education Action Plan Goals 1 and 2, promoting public awareness and conservation through visible, place-based learning. Drafts of the proposed signage are included in the attachments. This signage

clearly communicates the time it takes for a native landscape to establish. This will preempt and prevent complaints of its appearance during the establishment period when a patron may compare it to the previous water intensive state. After maturing of the landscape, we expect to demonstrate in a very publicly visible space, that native landscapes are beautiful, fit the climate and save tremendous amounts of water. This will also promote other Colorado Water Conservation Board supported efforts to enable turf to native conversations such as conversations at residential properties.

As part of a broader initiative to retrofit inefficient parks, the Lilac Park project offers meaningful water savings, high public visibility, and strong alignment with basin and state water goals.

### Related Studies

The Lilac Park Water-Wise Landscaping Project is supported by and contributes to the implementation of several key planning efforts that guide water conservation, land use, and sustainable landscape practices in the region. The Grand Junction Regional Water Efficiency Plan (2023), developed in coordination with the Clifton Water District, Ute Water Conservancy District, and Town of Palisade, outlines the City's commitment to reducing water use by 1.4% annually. It prioritizes strategies such as turf replacement, smart irrigation systems, and demonstration projects to reduce municipal demand and delay costly infrastructure expansion.

The project directly supports the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) Master Plan (2021), which identified turf-to-native conversion and irrigation system upgrades as top capital priorities for underutilized and water-intensive park spaces.

In addition, the project aligns with the City's 2024 Sustainability and Adaptation Plan, which includes a goal to reduce water consumption from landscape irrigation by expanding turf conversion and transitioning to drought-tolerant, climate-appropriate planting. The Lilac Park renovation is a direct implementation of these strategies and supports long-term climate resilience and urban heat mitigation efforts.

The project also complements the region's long-standing Drought Response Plan, coordinated by the City and its regional water partners, which outlines conservation measures during drought periods. By reducing baseline outdoor water use at one of the City's more visible parks, the project improves drought preparedness and contributes to system-wide water reliability.

In addition, this project complements two active CWCB-funded efforts: the City's turf replacement rebate program targeting single-family residences that replaces bluegrass with native, low-water plants, and the City's Graywater Education and Incentive Program, which includes public training, a plan for a demonstration system at Colorado Mesa University, and rebates for graywater system installation in Grand Junction. Together, these efforts form a coordinated, citywide approach to reducing outdoor potable water use and promoting long-term conservation across both public and private landscapes.

### Taxpayer Bill of Rights

The City of Grand Junction has voter authorization to receive and expend all revenues over the amount which it would be permitted to collect under Article X, Section 20 of the Colorado Constitution. The City may expend those revenues for any governmental