



Agenda Memorandum

Agenda Item –
{{section.number}}.{{item.number}}.

City Council Study Session
May 5, 2025



Strategic Priority 5: Resilient Infrastructure

Maintain and invest in resilient infrastructure that creates the highest return for safety, community connectivity, enjoyment of life, and local economic success.

Subject: Wattenberg Reservoir Complex Project Update

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Recommended City Council Action:

This report is for information only and requires no action by City Council.

Summary Statement:

- The City holds ownership interest in three downstream reservoirs as components of the City's overall water rights portfolio and water supply infrastructure. One of these downstream reservoirs, the Wattenberg Reservoir Complex Project (Project), is being developed in Weld County, located approximately two miles northwest of Brighton, Colorado.
- The City and its project partner, South Adams County Water and Sanitation District (District), are responsible for designing and constructing the infrastructure necessary to operate the reservoir complex. As part of this partnership, the District has the right to store and manage its own water resources and is financially accountable for its share of the development, operation, and maintenance of all infrastructure to serve its customers.
- In upcoming City Council meetings, several key action items will be presented for review and consideration in order to continue progressing the Project. This Staff Report is intended to provide background information prior to these items being brought before City Council for

consideration.

Background Information:

The City has developed a robust raw water supply system that spans from Golden to Brighton, ensuring a reliable and resilient water supply system for the benefit of Westminster residents and businesses. The City's upstream water rights play a critical role in directly filling Standley Lake, while the downstream water rights support the City's ability to meet water court-defined obligations and facilitate water rights exchanges back to Standley Lake. This extensive and intricate system provides the City the ability to most efficiently manage and operate the City's raw water infrastructure, maximizing every drop of water the City is entitled to and enhancing resilience during periods of drought.

The Wattenberg Reservoir Complex, located near Brighton, was initiated in 1999 through a series of agreements between the City and CAMAS, an aggregate mining company now known as Holcim (see vicinity map in Attachment 1). These agreements transferred a parcel of land to the City, while the mining company retained the mineral rights to extract sand and gravel from the land. This practice is common along the South Platte River (SPR), as the mining process creates an ideal foundation for converting the below-grade mined area into water storage facilities for use by local water supply providers.

A master plan for the site has been completed, which generally outlines the necessary infrastructure required to design and construct before incorporating the two below-grade reservoir cells into the City's raw water supply system (Attachment 2). The development of this infrastructure has been divided into two major components, taking into account that the North Cell has already been delivered to the City, while the South Cell is still being mined by Holcim.

Component 1 is the North Cell Slope Protection and Spillway Project. Since the North Cell is located within the floodplain and floodway of the SPR, Component 1 focuses on fortifying and protecting the North Cell from flood damage risks. This will involve constructing a spillway between the cell and the SPR, providing overtopping slope protection for the reservoir's interior side slopes, and armoring the SPR riverbank.

Component 2, the Reservoir Facilities Project, involves the infrastructure required to convey water into and out of the reservoir cells. This includes a diversion and conveyance system from the Brighton Ditch to the reservoir complex, an interconnect pipeline to hydraulically connect the two reservoir cells, a pump station to facilitate water transfer to and from the reservoir cells and the SPR, and other essential site facilities such as access roads and remote operations infrastructure.

The City has partnered with the District on this project. The City is contractually obligated to deliver storage space within the reservoir complex and the District is responsible for its share of storage, infrastructure, operation and maintenance costs, as well as the management of its own water resources. Consistent with this partnership, an immediate next step for this project will be to complete an agreement with the District clarifying financial commitments for Component 1.

To facilitate the continued advancement of this critical initiative, City Council will be requested to consider authorizing the items outlined below in upcoming City Council meetings:

- Execute an amendment to the Grant of License Agreement with Holcim, extending the term of Holcim's use of an on-site conveyor system and its alignment in exchange for certain City benefits.

- Execute an agreement with the District to contribute District funds toward Component 1 construction.
- Authorize a contract for Component 1 construction services to implement protection measures that fortify the North Cell against future flood damage risks.
- Authorize a contract for Component 2 design services for engineering design of the remaining infrastructure required to incorporate the reservoir complex into the City's water supply system.
- Execute a closing agreement with the District to meet contractual obligations and allocate storage space to the District.
- Execute easement agreements with the City of Aurora to reestablish a severed easement resulting from construction and permit the City of Westminster access to maintain riverbank stabilization.
- Execute an operation and maintenance agreement with the District to formalize long-term partnership responsibilities for managing the reservoir complex to benefit both parties and their respective customers.

The Strategic Priority of Resilient Infrastructure is met by investing in the City's raw water infrastructure to increase reliability and resilience of the City's water supply.

Respectfully submitted,



Jody L. Andrews
City Manager

Attachments:

Attachment 1 – Wattenberg Vicinity Map

Attachment 2 – Wattenberg General Plan