

THE MILL CREEK FLOOD CONTROL AND PARKWAY PROJECT

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Mill Creek Flood Control and Parkway Project is to alleviate periodic damage caused by flash floods in Moab, to reduce community national flood insurance rates, and to develop Mill Creek (and eventually Pack Creek) into a community amenity as a parkway. The positive aspects of developing the Mill Creek Parkway in addition to flood protection measures include promoting city beautification, maintaining open space, creating non-motorized travel corridors, maintaining water quality, and enhancing wildlife habitat.

The Mill Creek Parkway will provide a 3 mile linear trail system that will connect neighborhoods and public parks along the creek in the City limits. In addition, Parkway planning will include sites outside the city limits in two locations: the BLM administered recreation site at the upper end and a wetlands preserve at the lower end of the creek. Parkway design considerations will be given to aesthetics, circulation, recreation, bank stabilization, and wildlife habitat compatible with water conveyance and storage related to flood control, and with current land uses (residential and commercial).

A draft Mill Creek Flood Control and Parkway Project Master Plan is scheduled to be completed by December 1991 including drawings and a video production. In order to accomplish this the City Landscape Architect/Assistant Planner will conduct public meetings, access and coordinate technical consulting services, and search for planning and implementation funding. The final plans for the Mill Creek Project will be contingent on the technical study results that will be available after December 1991.

II. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 1957 In the Master Plan for Moab's Future, 1957, a dam was proposed for flood control and recommended that the creek bed be converted into a street.
- 1963-65 Multi-Purpose Project and Channel, 1963-65. A report on Mill creek flood control prepared by the Army Corps of Engineers.
- 1968 In the Comprehensive Development Plan for Grand County including Moab and Spanish Valley, 1968-1985, it was proposed that Mill Creek and Pack Creek be developed into a stream parkway system including an "intown passive park" for the business district.

- 1974 Mill Creek Multi-Purpose Project and Channel Interim Study and Report, November 1974. A report on Mill Creek flood control prepared by the Army Corps of Engineers.
- 1975 Flood Hazard Analysis for Moab and Vicinity, December 1979. A report prepared by the Soil Conservation Service at the request of Moab City Council and the Utah Division of Water Resources. The purpose of the report was to provide information for cooperative agency projects. The information was to be used by the Army Corps of Engineers to determine the size of the Mill Creek flood control channel. The flood plain data was also to be used by the local planners to regulate land use of flood prone areas and initiate measures to reduce flood damage.
- 1979 Flood Insurance Study, City of Moab, December 1979. A report completed on Mill Creek and Pack Creek by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The purpose of the study was to investigate the existence and severity of flood hazards in Moab and Grand County. The information was to be used to convert Moab to the regular program of flood insurance by the Federal Insurance Administration. Further use of the information was for local and regional planners in their efforts to promote sound land use and flood plain development.
- 1982 Final Feasibility Report for Moab, Utah, Interim, June 1982. A report prepared by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The purpose of the study was to determine the feasibility of providing flood control measures on Mill Creek at Moab and to determine if there is a federal interest in implementing such measures. Flood control alternatives were analyzed to identify those that appeared to be economically feasible and responsive to the needs in the area. The alternatives set forth were not implemented by the city.
- 1987&1989 Moab/Spanish Valley: Spatial Analysis and Physical Planning Guidelines, Phase I, 1987, and The City of Moab: Spatial Analysis and Physical Planning Guidelines, Phase II, 1989. Two Field Service Projects conducted by the graduate students in the Department of Landscape Architecture and Environmental Planning, Utah State University which recommended the protection and development of Mill Creek and Pack Creek for flood management, recreation, city beautification, and wildlife habitat. Conceptual site plans were also developed in 1989 for the parkway at Main Street.

1989 The Bureau of Land Management began to work with the Grand County Middle School students to plan a park in the Powerhouse Dam area on Mill Creek. The City of Moab is continuing the planning of the site in 1991 with the BLM and the students to include the park as part of the Mill Creek Parkway.

The Grand County High School students began designing a park on the school grounds adjoining Mill Creek. The City of Moab is continuing to work with the students in 1991 to develop a park plan incorporating the site into the Mill Creek Project.

1990 Planning Coordinator was hired by the City of Moab in March. The Mill Creek Project was considered a priority.

A citizen's proposal for Mill Creek Parkway development was presented to the Moab City Planning Commission in June. The plan was based on involving the various special interest groups in the community.

Moab applied for a Community Development Block Grant in part for the Mill Creek Flood Control and Parkway Project and was awarded \$46,794.

Moab requested a Reconnaissance Study by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to update the 1982 cost/benefit analysis of different flood control alternatives for Mill Creek. The Army Corps agreed to do the study and the report is due December 1991. There is no cost to the requesting entity (Moab City).

The Moab City Council gave first priority to the Mill Creek Flood Control and Parkway Project on its list of capital improvement projects at a public hearing December 3rd.

The City of Moab hired a landscape architect on an internship basis for 5 months beginning December to plan and design the Mill Creek Flood Control and Parkway Project. Time would also be spent on the new Moab Comprehensive Plan.

1991 The Moab City Planning Department conducted a Mill Creek Project planning meeting in January. The participants included local, state, and federal land management agencies, federal agencies offering technical assistance, city and county representatives. The goal was to identify areas of concerns, clarify roles of agency

involvement and city commitments, and to determine a future course of action.

The Nature Conservancy and the Utah Division of Wildlife expressed interest in City participation with the interpretive facility design for the newly dedicated Scott M. Matheson Wetland Preserve. The Preserve facilities would be located in the vicinity of the junction of Mill Creek and the Colorado River and would be included as an attraction of the Mill Creek Parkway.

Utah Department of Agriculture provided the services of a three person consultant team with funding from section 319 of the federal Clean Water Act. The "Stream Team" consisted of a watershed hydrologist, aquatic biologist, and an engineer to evaluate the stream stability and provide alternatives for stream bank stabilization. Their report will be available July 1st.