



City Manager's Office

MEMORANDUM

DATE: 11/3/2023

TO: Mayor and City Council

THROUGH: Doug Thornley, City Manager **Approved Electronically**
Jackie Bryant, Assistant City Manager

FROM: John Flansberg, Regional Infrastructure Administrator
Kayla Garcia, Management Analyst

SUBJECT: **Virginia Range Wildlife and Safety Management Plan Update.**

This memorandum is provided as an update to City Council and no action is being requested at this time.

On March 8, 2023, City Council approved \$500,000 from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding allocated to the City of Reno for Virginia Range Horses Fencing: Barrier fencing in South Reno to protect wild horses and urban property. Staff contracted with J-U-B Engineers, Inc. to create a wildlife and safety management plan to recommend improvements for the wildlife / urban interface along the Virginia Range and prepare documents for bidding this work. The attached memorandum from J-U-B outlines the work completed to date.

There is a separate attachment that includes the fencing assessment completed by J-U-B. The direction to J-U-B on this item is to keep the fence in the same location as it exists today with the exception of creating an area where the Virginia Range horses may access Steamboat Creek near Alexander Lake Road for the purpose of drinking water until other accommodations may be made for water up on the range itself.

Please reach out to John Flansberg, Regional Infrastructure Administrator, if you have any questions at 775.399.2184 or flansbergj@reno.gov.

HELPING EACH OTHER
CREATE BETTER COMMUNITIES



THE
LANGDON
GROUP



GATEWAY
MAPPING
INC.

J-U-B FAMILY OF COMPANIES

MEMORANDUM

DATE: November 2, 2023
TO: John Flansberg, P.E.
CC:
FROM: Garth Oksol, P.E.
SUBJECT: Wildlife And Safety Management Plan Update

John,

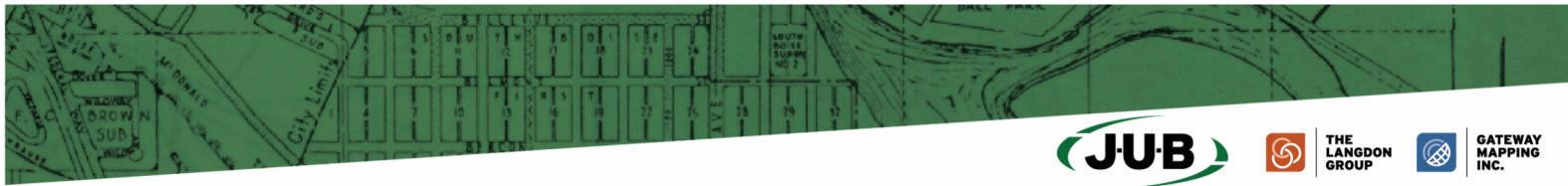
To date J-U-B has completed two tasks and is working on a third for the City of Reno.

The first completed task provided input and guidance on a potential Federal Lands transfer with the Bureau of Land Management. The parcel in question lies adjacent to City of Reno land at the eastern terminus of Alexander Lake Road; Parcel APN 021-270-34. J-U-B provided a three-tiered rank for portions of the overall parcel. Ultimately, the Federal Lands transfer was not advanced on the Federal level.

The second completed task was to assess the existing fence line condition from Alexander Lake Road to Mira Loma Drive. J-U-B surveyed the existing fence and provided an Assessment Report with two recommendations.

The third task currently under design is to provide improvements to protect primarily the wild horses along the Virginia Range. Two locations were identified as overly problematic for horses gaining access to roadways. The eastern terminus of Alexander Lake Road and the northern terminus of Rio Wrangler Parkway have historically been problematic. Low compliance of closing existing gates and vandalism have rendered existing wild horse control measure essentially non-existent for long periods of time. J-U-B is designing improvements at those two locations which are passive in nature and less likely to be affected by vandalism.

Upcoming work includes finalizing the design for Task 3 and developing a set of documents for competitive bidding that includes replacing/repairing the fence from Alexander Lake Road to Mira Loma Drive identified in Task 2. Outreach efforts with NDOT will continue as further work



J-U-B ENGINEERS, INC.



THE LANGDON GROUP



GATEWAY MAPPING INC.

J-U-B FAMILY OF COMPANIES

along Geiger Grade continues and deficiencies in the Virginia Foothill and Toll Road areas are identified.

No additional efforts towards an overall Virginia Range Wildlife and Safety Management Plan have occurred. Future meetings with Councilwoman Duerr and invested Stakeholders will occur but have not been scheduled. J-U-B recommends our subsidiary company, The Langdon Group, who has extensive experience in northern and eastern Nevada working with the Bureau of Land Management and wild horse advocacy groups, to lead a workshop or two and take the preliminary work done with Reno, Washoe County, NV Department of Agriculture, and NDOT and develop a wholistic plan for the Virginia Range including how future developments account for wild horses.

Please let me know if you would like further details on the tasks to date. Thank you.

Garth

MEMORANDUM

DATE: September 11, 2023
TO: John Flansberg, P.E.
CC:
FROM: Garth Oksol, P.E.
SUBJECT: Wildlife and Safety Management Plan: Virginia Range Fence Condition Assessment Report

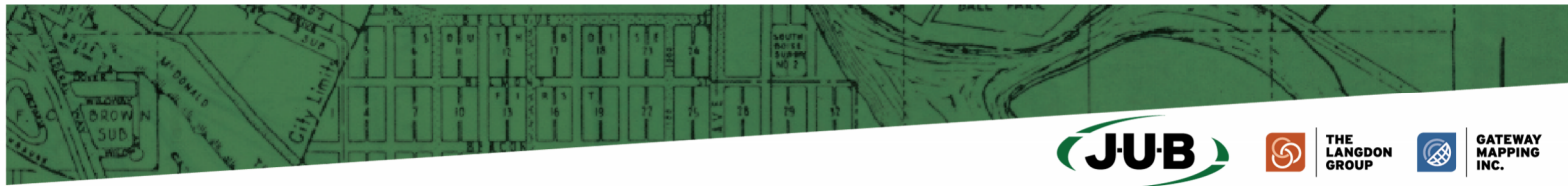
John,

We have surveyed the fence line that runs along the Virginia Range mountains and roughly borders the City of Reno and BLM property, see figure 1. The existing fence that extends from Alexander Lake Road to Mira Loma Drive is in poor condition and needs repair. Figures 3-6 shows areas along the fence line of the BLM property where the metal posts are leaning, and the wood posts are rotting. Of note, Figures 7 and 8 show the fence line near Mira Loma Drive. The fence is in very poor condition here and allowing horses to access the neighborhood including Mira Loma drive and potentially Veterans Parkway. In order to maintain this fence line there are two options that we are proposing.

- Option 1: Replace and/or Install a replacement fence along the City of Reno/BLM property line.
- Option 2: Replace and Install a new fence along the top of Steamboat Creek's eastern bank.

Option 1 would require the City of Reno to get permission from BLM to allow for a construction easement. The terrain is much steeper and could drive up the construction cost. This fence line keeps horse liability for this area on BLM property. The approximate length of this existing fence line is 7,724 linear feet and will need to be entirely replaced due to its current condition.

Option 2 is a combination of new fence and replacement of existing fence. This existing fence has gaps and is in similar condition to the fence that borders the two property lines discussed in Option 1. This option would not require an easement. However, the location of the fence will



J-U-B ENGINEERS, INC.



THE LANGDON GROUP



GATEWAY MAPPING INC.

J-U-B FAMILY OF COMPANIES

need to be verified that it does not create issues with the Steamboat Creek floodway. It's important to note there are three known locations of cultural significance, two rabbit walls and a grinding rock outcropping below the north rabbit wall, that predate European settlers. At these locations care would be needed to avoid installing the new fence line in a manner that disturbs the locations. The proposed fence line along the eastern edge of the Creek would be approximately 8,465 linear feet.

Both options prevent the feral horses from crossing the creek and getting onto Veterans Parkway and Mira Loma Drive but allow them to have access to water. In addition, Option 1 would prevent the horses from grazing on the hillside. This would help maintain the native vegetation and natural view of this side of the Virginia Mountains. Option 2, with the fence line replaced near the Creek, would open the hillside for the horses to graze. It is our understanding that the horses already have access to plenty of native vegetation to graze and don't necessarily need this area for that purpose.

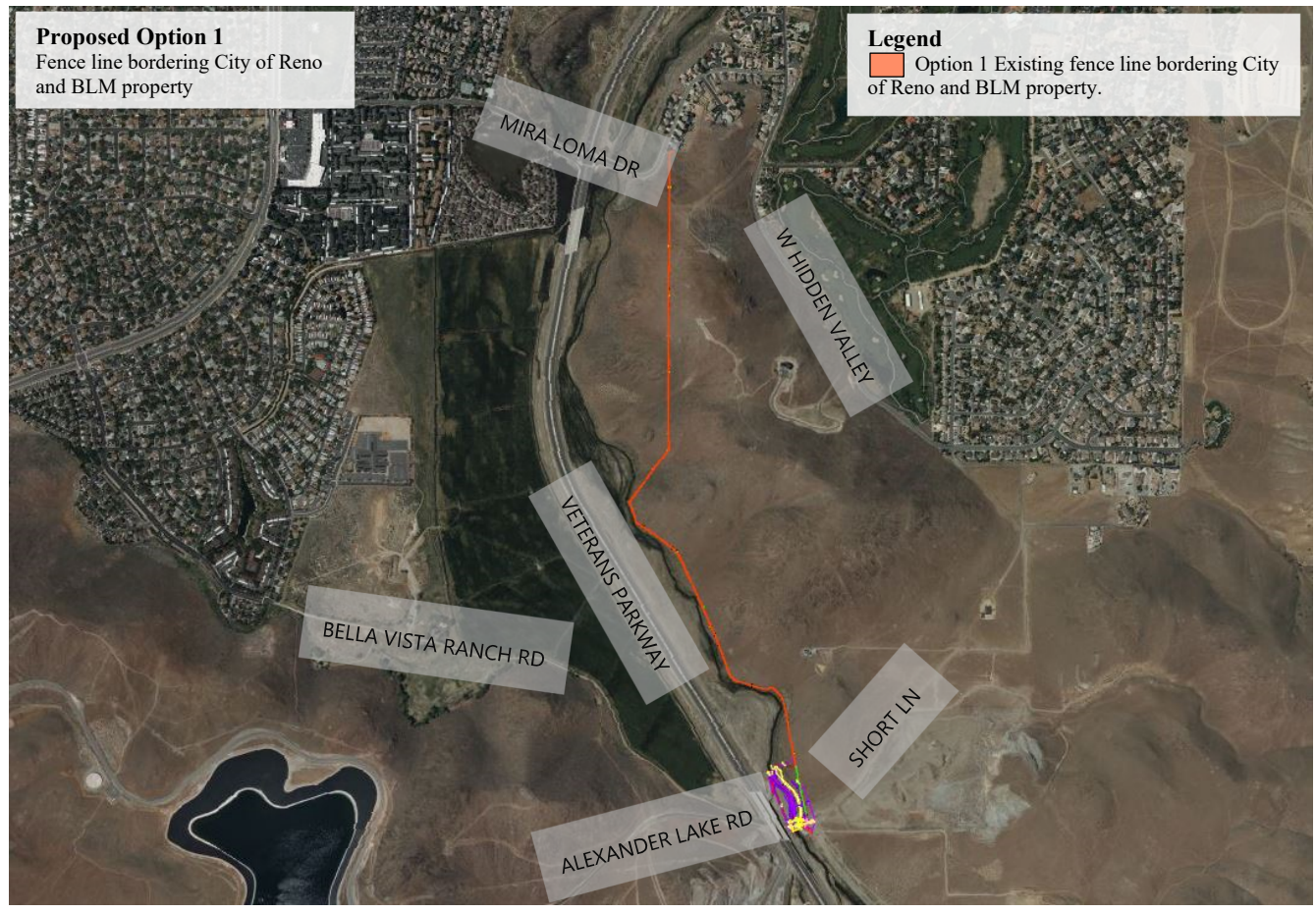
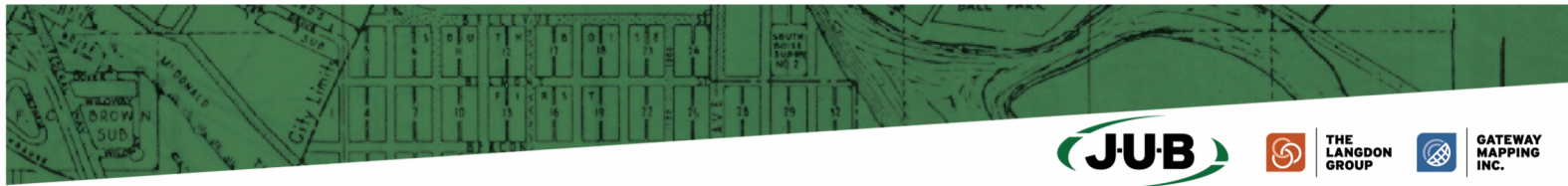


Figure 1: Existing fence line that borders the BLM and City of Reno property (Option 1)

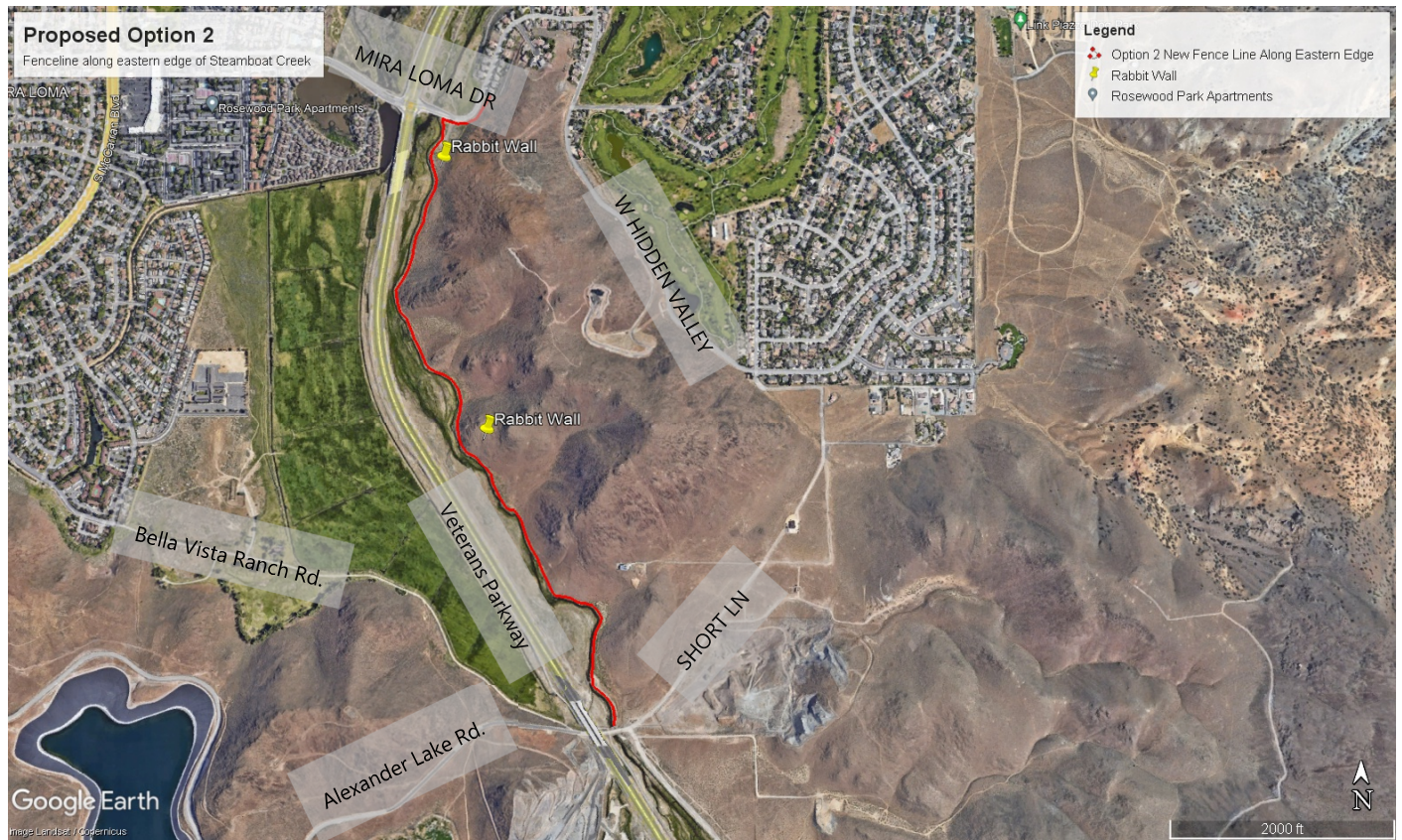
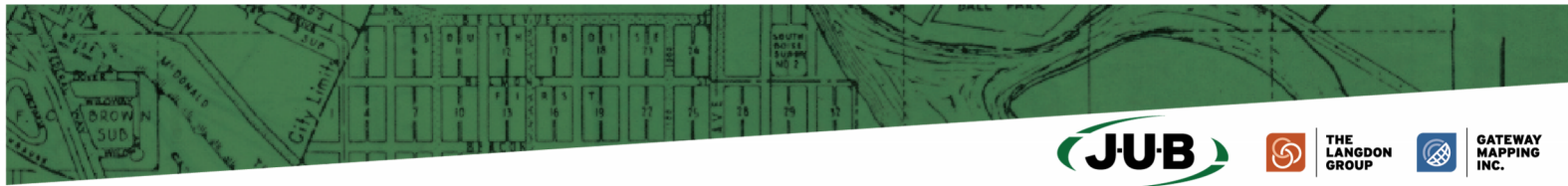
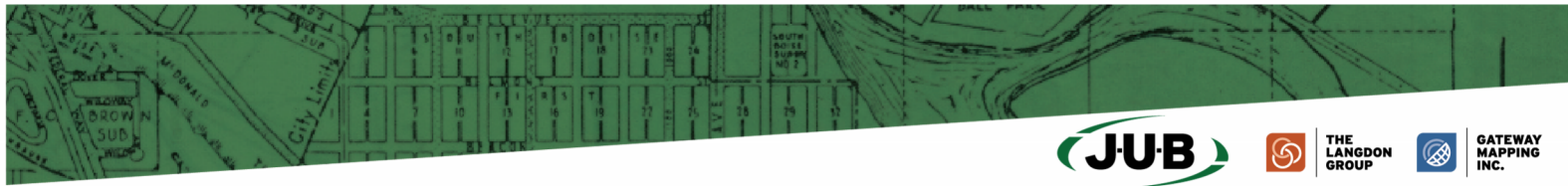


Figure 2: Proposed fence line along eastern side of Steamboat Creek (Option 2)



J-U-B FAMILY OF COMPANIES



Figure 3: Fence facing east



Figure 4: Fence facing west



Figure 5: Fence facing west



Figure 6: Fence facing northwest

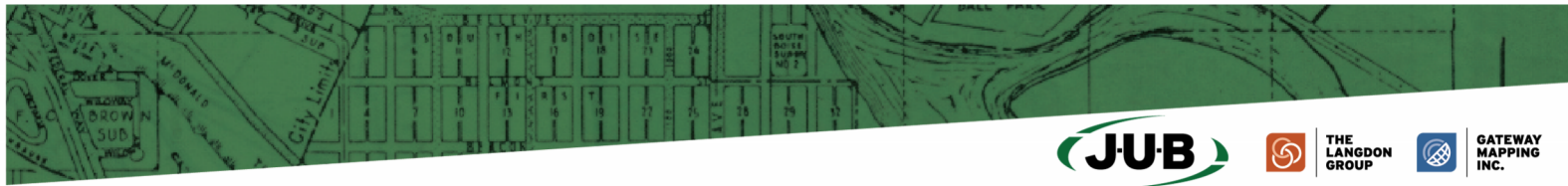
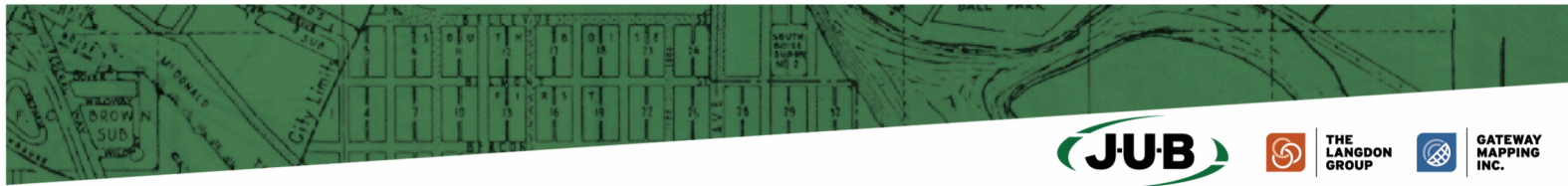


Figure 7



Figure 8



J-U-B ENGINEERS, INC.



THE LANGDON GROUP



GATEWAY MAPPING INC.

J-U-B FAMILY OF COMPANIES

Our recommendation would be to choose option 1. Even though it would require the City of Reno to get an easement from BLM, it would avoid the Steamboat Creek floodway and the areas of historical significance and prevent the feral horses from overgrazing the hillside leading up the Creek. Please let us know your thoughts on the proposed options and which one would best suit the needs of this project for the City of Reno.

Thank you,

Garth Oksol