

## **Mendenhall River Glacier Lake Outburst Flooding (GLOF) Local Improvement District Frequently Asked Questions 2.12.2025**

### **Why are we focusing on short-term temporary flood mitigation?**

Any long-term permanent flood mitigation will require design and engineering to ensure we don't do more harm than good. CBJ is concerned that without temporary flood fighting, the devastation to valley homes would be overwhelming while we work together on a long-term solution. CBJ's highest federal priority has been to secure federal funding for the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to begin a General Investigation study to do that work. In the meantime, CBJ and the United States Forest Service have entered into an agreement to spend USFS federal dollars on data collection and studies in advance of the General Investigation to keep things moving.

In addition to mitigation, CBJ will continue to provide emergency response and management in the event of a flood or any other disaster in our community.

### **What is the total project cost for Phase 1 HESCO barrier installation: \$7.83M**

This includes removing obstructions on riverfront property, stabilizing soils, installing drainage pipe and check valves in barriers, removing organics, bank armoring, permitting, accessing and filling HESCO bags, and restoring property after HESCO barriers are removed for 2 miles of riverfront.

Under the proposal as amended by the Assembly, CBJ taxpayers at large would pay for 60% of the project (\$4.7M), and properties included in the LID would be responsible for 40%.

### **Is CBJ pursuing other funding sources for flood mitigation?**

Yes. We are working with the Federal Delegation to pursue funding through legislation and working with FEMA and HUD for potential grant programs. The challenge for Phase 1 is timing; it is unlikely any funding would be available by the time we need to expend the funds to protect homes before a 2025 GLOF. However, the Federal Delegation has been incredibly supportive and helpful in both engaging United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) for technical assistance in emergency flood fighting (HESCO barriers) and finding a long-term solution by supporting a USACE General Investigation Study. We will continue to work with the delegation, and pursue grants, to find funding for Phase 2 and long-term solutions.

### **How did CBJ decide what would be included in Phase 1 of the HESCO barrier installation project and why is/isn't my property included?**

With extensive consultation and involvement from United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) flood fighting experts, CBJ is planning to install USACE provided HESCO barriers as a near-term solution to mitigate potential widespread damage from future releases. Based upon several factors, including the locations of major inundation that occurred during the 2024 GLOF, a survey of high-water marks along the length of the river from the 2024 GLOF, the availability of time and materials to install barriers before a 2025 GLOF, and the number of properties that can be protected by such barriers, a 2-mile stretch of riverbank from north Marion Dr. to Rivercourt Way was identified as the most viable alternative to provide the most protection to the highest number of flood-vulnerable residents and homeowners.

### **Where can I find more information on the Phase 1 HESCO barrier installation project?**

Please see the HESCO Barrier Phase 1 Project progress section (p.5-6 of this document) and visit the Phase 1 HESCO Project website at <https://juneau.org/engineering-public-works/hesco-barrier-phase-1>.

# Mendenhall River Glacier Lake Outburst Flooding (GLOF) Local Improvement District Frequently Asked Questions 2.12.2025

## What is a Local Improvement District?

A Local Improvement District, or LID, is a mechanism in CBJ code for a benefited property to pay for an infrastructure improvement (in this case, the installation of the infrastructure to protect properties and homes from flooding). LIDs are governed under [Title 15.10 Local Improvements and Special Assessments](#).

## What is the process for this LID?

The Mendenhall GLOF LID has been proposed by the Assembly in Ordinance 2024-40(am). However, there is a lot of public process before any final decisions are made and the project begins.

During the week of December 16, CBJ will send a certified mailing to all property owners with details relevant to their individual assessment and clear instructions on how to protest the LID. Property owners have six (6) weeks to object. If enough property owners object to equal 50% or more of the total project cost, the LID may only move forward with a vote of 8 Assembly members. No action by a property owner is considered endorsement of the LID.

## Timeline for LID

November 18 – Introduction of [Ordinance 2024-40](#) creating a local improvement district

December 16 – Public hearing #1 on Ordinance 2024-40 ([View Recording](#))

Week of December 16 – Certified mailing went out to everyone on the assessment roll with information on the assessment and clear instructions on how to object in writing.

January 3 – Neighborhood meeting ([View Recording](#))

February 3 – Public hearing #2 on Ordinance 2024-40(am) ([View Recording and Objections Received](#)). Objections due in writing by the close of the public hearing on February 3, 2025.

March 3 – Ordinance is effective.

## I am NOT in favor of the LID – How do I object?

*(UPDATE: The deadline for written objections was February 3, 2025)*

The Assembly has scheduled a public hearing at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, February 3, 2025, in the City and Borough Assembly Chambers located at 155 Heritage Way, Juneau, Alaska for the hearing and to consider adoption of Ordinance Serial No. 2024-40(am).

Written objections may be filed with the City and Borough Clerk (in person or via [city.clerk@juneau.gov](mailto:city.clerk@juneau.gov)) by 4 p.m. on February 3, 2025, or in person, by the close of public hearing, on February 3, 2025.

For your convenience, CBJ has included a form that property owners can use to object to the LID. Use of this form is not required. However, any communication to object must include at least the following information: owner's name, parcel number, and a clear statement that you object to the LID.

If a property is owned by more than one individual, any owner can submit the objection. If a property is owned by a trust or business, the authorized signatory must submit the objection.

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### **I am in favor of the LID – What should I do?**

If you are in favor of the LID you do not need to submit anything – taking no action counts as support for the LID. However, your opinion is valuable to the Assembly and you are welcome to weigh in at the public hearing and/or via email at [BoroughAssembly@juneau.gov](mailto:BoroughAssembly@juneau.gov).

### **How do I learn more about the project and/or the LID?**

*(Update: View the [Meeting Recording here](#))*

CBJ will hold a neighborhood meeting on January 3 at 5:30 p.m. at Thunder Mountain Middle School Auditorium. In addition, you can visit the CBJ Flood Response website: <https://juneau.org/manager/flood-response> or email [floodresponse@juneau.gov](mailto:floodresponse@juneau.gov)

### **What if the LID fails?**

*(UPDATE: The LID passed by at the [February 3, 2025 Assembly meeting](#) with 117 objections filed out of the 466 total properties. As noted above, the LID process requires objections from enough property owners to equal 50% or more of the total project cost for the LID to fail. No action by a property owner is considered endorsement of the LID. View the February 3, 2025 public hearing meeting materials and objections [here](#))*

The Assembly can authorize the LID by an affirmative vote of eight members. However, it is unlikely there would be the political will to override the neighborhood. The body has given every indication that if the property owners do not want the HESCO barriers installed, the project will cease.

### **If the LID fails, will CBJ complete another mitigation project by Spring/Summer 2025?**

No. It will not be possible for CBJ to complete an alternative project in that time frame. At the direction of the Assembly, CBJ will shift to working on the multi-year long-term solution. CBJ will continue to provide emergency management and response.

### **What if I object to the LID but still want HESCO barriers installed?**

It is unlikely that HESCO barriers will be installed along the river before next season if the LID fails. Given the significant expense of the project, the LID is the best available funding mechanism to ensure that the barriers are put up in time for next year's flood.

### **What if the LID is approved?**

If the project is approved, work will begin on-site preparation after February 3, 2025. The bulk of the project will take place after March 3 when the remainder of the funds become available. The goal is to complete the project by July 2025 based on historical GLOF releases.

After the project is complete, the Assembly approves a final assessment roll by resolution (likely sometime in the summer of 2025). No payment is due until after confirmation of the assessment roll.

### **How much will my assessment cost?**

Property owners will pay their portion of the actual cost of the project, not to exceed \$6,292 per parcel.

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The properties specially benefitted will have up to 10 years for repayment of funds at a 0 percent interest rate. A property owner can pay the LID off at any time in full without penalty.

Four homes require additional armoring due to their location on the river and their lack of armoring. These homes have been included in the LID with a \$50,000 assessment payable over 30 years, a 0 percent interest for 10 years and then a 4.78 percent interest rate thereafter, in addition to the assessment shared by all homeowners. This \$50,000 represents a shared cost with the CBJ, as the amount is significantly below the anticipated cost for armoring.

*(NEW)* After the HESCO Barrier Phase 1 project is complete, the Assembly approves a final assessment roll by resolution. If the costs to be borne by the benefitted properties are more than approved in the ordinance initiating the district, property owners have an opportunity to object to the LID through a similar process as its formation. Property owners will pay the actual local cost of the project distributed among the district per the assessment methodology. Before the assessment roll is finalized the Assembly can, by ordinance, exclude a parcel from the district but it cannot increase the boundaries without going through the objection process again. The Assembly will set the due date of the payment and when they become delinquent by resolution. After the first payment, all payments are included on the annual property tax bill as a separate charge.

### **How do I pay my assessment?**

After the project is finalized and the assessment roll is finalized, the first and all subsequent payments will be included as part of the property tax bill set July 1 and due September 30.

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### **What if I don't pay my assessment?**

CBJ puts a lien on your property until the assessment is paid. The assessment travels with the property, so if the property transfers, the lien and required payments also transfer. The Assembly will set the delinquency schedule for non-payment in the same resolution establishing the first payment date.

### **Who is included in the LID?**

The LID includes properties in the 16-foot inundation map excluding parcels that will not be protected from Phase 1. (Exhibits A). Properties north of Marion Dr and south of Rivercourt Way are not included because that's the projected limitation on their flood containment effectiveness. The 16-foot inundation map is the best data that we currently have that reflects protected properties.

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Properties in the 16-foot inundation map that receive some water on their parcels but do not necessarily receive severe flooding are included given that the HESCO barriers are designed to protect to some degree above a 16-foot event. While it would be ideal to wait until new inundation maps and complete HESCO design is available before making these decisions, that is not possible from a timing perspective if we are to have Phase 1 complete before a GLOF event next year. At the December 16, 2024, public hearing on the LID ordinance, the Assembly amended the cost split from 50/50 CBJ/property owners to 60/40 CBJ/property owners. This was done to reduce the cost to property owners in the LID with the stated intent of reducing the property owner impact due to the possibility that with more time and study, more properties may have been able to be included in the LID.

### **I live on the Mendenhall River and can't agree or disagree with this project until I know specific details about how it will affect my property/viewshed/bank.**

It is unlikely that CBJ will have answers to all of the homeowners' specific questions about the placement of HESCO barriers on their property before the February 3 objection date. CBJ has published a high-level version of where the HESCO barriers will be placed (see "HESCO Project Summary" [here](#)). However, as we continue to work on design and engineering for the project, staff will work with each property owner on the specific details for their property. Property owners can also send questions or comments to [floodresponse@juneau.gov](mailto:floodresponse@juneau.gov)

### **Who is responsible for maintaining and removing the HESCO barriers?**

CBJ is responsible for maintaining the barriers and removing them at the end of the project. The total project cost includes a \$500,000 reserve fund that will be used to establish a grant program to help homeowners restore their property.

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**NEW** *(Added 2.12.2025)*

### **What is the progress on the HESCO Barrier Phase 1 Project? (as of 2.12.25)**

- CBJ EPW Project Managers began meeting with riverfront property owners in October 2024 and followed up during the week of January 27, 2025 to refine the proposed locations of the HESCO barriers. CBJ is at approximately 95% design of the alignment. Additional information on the alignment can be found in the [presentation](#) provided at the public meeting held on January 3, 2025). CBJ will continue meeting with residents throughout the installation.
- HESCO alignment and configuration work is ongoing, informed by preliminary modeling information from CBJ's Hydrological and Hydraulic (H&H study) consultant, Michael Baker Inc. The analysis of and validation of the HESCO placement and height will ensure the barriers are constructed to approximately four feet higher elevation than the August 2024 GLOF. This validation is also a critical step for further calibration and refinement of the model, as well as for the development of updated inundation maps up to 20 feet.
- Work continues on the completion of permit documents for the USACE, Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Alaska Department of Natural Resources, the CBJ Floodplain Development Permit, and FEMA.

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- Timing for Installation - The United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) provided HESCO barriers are expected to arrive in early March. USACE will also provide a technical expert for the installation. HESCO installation and associated bank armoring are expected to begin during the end of March or beginning of April dependent upon factors including the date of HESCO barrier arrival, contractor availability, and weather conditions. CBJ intends to execute the project using multiple contractors to complete the work in advance of a possible 2025 GLOF and is currently finalizing the contractor procurement plan and obtaining the required permits. The project is planned for completion by July 2025.
- Future updates on the HESCO Phase 1 project, including refined technical details, schedule information, and more will be provided [here](#).

### **What is CBJ doing to pursue long-term solutions?**

CBJ, our Congressional Delegation, Tribes, and community partners have been advocating for funding for a long-term GLOF solution. The American Relief Act of 2025 set forth federal appropriations that established funding for USACE General Investigations (GI) study for \$20 million, including for investigations of long-term solutions to glacial lake outburst floods. CBJ is advocating for \$10 million of that GI funding. CBJ anticipates additional information from USACE regarding the timing and amount of support available by the end of February.

### **What is CBJ doing to pursue additional funding for flood mitigation?**

A summary of the partnerships, funding agencies, and activities that CBJ is currently pursuing is available in PDF form at [bit.ly/CBJFloodFunding](https://bit.ly/CBJFloodFunding) (This table is not exhaustive and will be updated as relevant.)

The goal of these efforts is to find federal funds to reduce the cost of the HESCO Barrier Phase I project and long-term mitigation to both homeowners and the broader community.