



## AGENDA SUMMARY REPORT

**SUBJECT:** Update from City Staff Regarding the Appeal Process that the City has Undertaken in Opposition to FEMA's Proposed Adjustments to the Flood Maps that Affect Properties in the City of Ukiah and Provide/Authorize any other Direction Deemed Necessary.

**DEPARTMENT:** Public Works

**PREPARED BY:** Tim Eriksen, Public Works Director/City Engineer

**PRESENTER:** Tim Eriksen, Public Works Director

**ATTACHMENTS:**

None

**Summary:** The Council will get an update from City Staff regarding the appeal process that the City has undertaken in opposition to FEMA's proposed adjustments to the flood maps that affect properties in the City of Ukiah.

**Background:** On March 1, 2023, the City Council received an update on the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) process of updating the flood plain elevations throughout the City of Ukiah. The Council directed staff to file a technical appeal and draft a letter for the Mayor's signature that would identify the impacts of the proposed changes. At the time of agenda publication, both of these efforts are underway.

In 2020, FEMA began the process of updating the flood plain elevations throughout the City of Ukiah. The first preliminary results were reported to the City Engineering team in 2021. The results were radically different than what currently exists in the city, the implications of which could have significant impacts on development and insurance rates throughout the city. Since that time, in order to protect the interests and investments of the community, City Staff has worked on solutions with FEMA staff to review the study results and discuss contradictions with observed historic flood events in the city. In short, City Staff have been concerned about the fact that the FEMA study does not reflect what City Staff has witnessed in the city during significant flood events. The hydraulic modeling performed by FEMA and their consultants is a very specialized field of Civil Engineering and not something current engineering staff are involved in on a regular basis. Therefore, Public Works Staff brought an item to the City Council on July 20, 2022, to award a contract with GHD Engineering. GHD has experts in the hydraulic field in order to assist in the review of the FEMA results.

**Discussion:** The FEMA appeal process expires on the night of the City Council meeting (March 15, 2023). The appeals that are eligible to be heard by FEMA must be technical. Staff and consultants have identified two technical, significant areas of concern that are appealable. The first is a review of the modeling process that was used by the FEMA hydrologists; the second is the elevation input that was used.

Staff has been working on both the technical appeal and the letter that highlights the impact on the Ukiah Valley. These work products are in process as this report is being written and will be inserted in the link below, as well as handed out at the meeting for Council and public information.

The City has links to all the updated information on this process on our website in the "Projects + Information" tab. The webpage can be found at <https://cityofukiah.com/flood-maps/>.

**Recommended Action:** Receive report and provide/authorize additional direction if necessary.

**BUDGET AMENDMENT REQUIRED:** NA

**CURRENT BUDGET AMOUNT:** NA

---

**PROPOSED BUDGET AMOUNT:** NA

---

**FINANCING SOURCE:** NA

---

**PREVIOUS CONTRACT/PURCHASE ORDER NO.:** NA

---

**COORDINATED WITH:** Community Development and City Manager's Office

---

**DIVERSITY-EQUITY INITIATIVES (DEI):**

---

**CLIMATE INITIATIVES (CI):** 6c – Ensure that climate responsibility is integrated throughout the City's departments and operations.

---

Approved:   
Sage Sangiacomo, City Manager