



## AGENDA SUMMARY REPORT

**SUBJECT:** Receive Report Regarding the City's Response to the Updated FEMA Floodplain Maps, Provide Direction to Staff, and Take Any Other Action Deemed Necessary.

**DEPARTMENT:** Public Works

**PREPARED BY:** Seth Strader, Administrative Analyst

**PRESENTER:** Tim Eriksen, Director of Public Works/City Engineer

### ATTACHMENTS:

1. 2024-09-20 Council Comment Ltr to FEMA re FEMA Floodplain Maps
2. City of Ukiah FEMA Map Comment Letter\_20SEP2024
3. Updated Floodplain Map

**Summary:** Council will receive a report regarding the City's response to FEMA's updated floodplain maps, provide Staff with direction, and take any other action deemed necessary.

**Background:** At Council's September 18, 2024, meeting, Staff provided an update regarding FEMA's July 2024 response to the City's initial appeal letter in 2023, including FEMA's proposed July 2024 floodplain maps. Staff also updated Council that FEMA had given the City and community until September 23, 2024, to provide comments regarding the updated floodplain maps. Given that an inaccurate floodplain map would disproportionately affect a large percentage of Ukiah's lowest income residents- who would have to pay for unnecessary flood insurance- it is vital that the data and analysis be accurate. Towards this end, at the September 18 meeting, by a 5-0 vote, Council directed Staff to pursue the creation of maps- through hydraulic and hydrology studies- for determining the 100-year floodplain.

**Discussion:** Staff completed the comment letters and emailed them to FEMA on September 20, 2024. Paper copies of the letters were also mailed to FEMA. Both a non-technical letter (Attachment 1), featuring observations from City Councilmembers residing in the FEMA proposed floodplains, and a technical letter (Attachment 2), featuring preliminary analysis undertaken by the City Engineer and the City's consultant, were sent.

As noted to Council on September 18, previous conversations with FEMA staff have led City Staff to conclude that with the comment period now over, FEMA intends to move towards making effective the July 2024 FEMA proposed floodplain map (Attachment 3; July 2024 FEMA proposed floodplains link: <https://www.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=e7a7dc3ebd7f4ad39bb8e485bb64ce44>). By Staff's estimation, the earliest this could occur would be between eight (8) and twelve (12) months from September 23, 2024.

However, recent preliminary hydrological and hydraulic analyses undertaken by the City, particularly with regard to a 10-year storm event (see technical letter in Attachment 2), suggest that the data FEMA used to arrive at its July 2024 proposed floodplain maps may be inaccurate. If this is proved by the City to be the case, there is a possibility that FEMA may further revise its maps or utilize the City's analysis and floodplain maps. Staff has requested a proposal from GHD for the development of these studies and will bring this forward for Council's review and possible approval upon receipt.

Staff recommends Council receive this report and provide additional direction as necessary.

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**Recommended Action:** Receive a report regarding the City's response to the updated FEMA floodplain maps, provide direction to Staff, and take any other action deemed necessary.

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**BUDGET AMENDMENT REQUIRED:** N/A

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**CURRENT BUDGET AMOUNT:** N/A

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**PROPOSED BUDGET AMOUNT:** N/A

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**FINANCING SOURCE:** N/A

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**PREVIOUS CONTRACT/PURCHASE ORDER NO.:** N/A

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**COORDINATED WITH:** Jason Benson, Senior Engineer; Tim Eriksen, City Engineer/Director of Public Works; Jesse Davis, Chief Planning Manager; and Craig Schlatter, Community Development Director

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**DIVERSITY-EQUITY INITIATIVES (DEI): Goal 4** – Identify and actively engage underrepresented communities in which to retain, expand, develop, and implement programs.

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**CLIMATE INITIATIVES (CI):** N/A

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**GENERAL PLAN ELEMENTS (GP):** GP-A6 - Safety Element

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Approved:

  
Sage Sangiacomo, City Manager