



AGENDA SUMMARY REPORT

SUBJECT: Receive Report Regarding FEMA's Response and Updated FEMA Floodplain Maps to the City of Ukiah's March 2023 Appeal; Authorize the City Manager to Develop and Submit a Second Appeal; and Take Any Other Action Deemed Necessary.

DEPARTMENT: Public Works

PREPARED BY: Seth

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

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Existing FEMA Floodplain
2. FEMA New Floodplains Proposal 2022
3. L.Huffman re FEMA_031523

Summary: Council will receive a report regarding FEMA's most recent response and updated FEMA floodplain maps to the City's 2023 appeal letter; authorize the City Manager to develop and submit a second appeal; and take any other action deemed necessary.

Background: The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) began updating the floodplain elevations, and corresponding maps, within the City of Ukiah in 2020. In 2022, FEMA presented the proposed updated floodplains to the City for comment (See Attachment 1 for existing floodplain and Attachment 2 for FEMA's newly proposed floodplain). In immediately noticing significant differences in the proposed floodplain versus what areas of the City and Ukiah Valley had actually flooded over the last 30 years, Staff requested the engineering firm GHD review the flood data provided by FEMA. GHD's review found deficiencies with FEMA's analysis and data inputs. With these noted discrepancies, Staff coordinated with GHD and Mayor Rodin to prepare and submit an appeal letter to FEMA through Congressman Jared Huffman's Office (Attachment 3).

Discussion: In response to the City's first appeal letter, FEMA has revised their initial proposed floodplain changes, reducing the expanded floodplain areas (please review the below link to access an interactive map of FEMA's most recently proposed floodplains). However, based on observed and anecdotal data about historical flooding over the last 30 years, as well as additional analysis conducted by GHD on September 12, the data and studies used by FEMA to produce the most recent floodplains appear incomplete. As a result, it is the opinion of both Staff and GHD that FEMA's proposed floodplain maps still include many new properties in the special flood hazard area that should not be included in this area. This is significant, as properties in the special flood hazard area would be required to obtain flood insurance, of which annual costs can be between \$2,000 and \$8,000. Especially concerning is that many of the affected properties within the proposed floodplain are in a census tract/block group that has among the highest concentrations of low-income residents in Ukiah, thereby increasing the risk of foreclosures and vacant homes.

July 2024 FEMA proposed floodplains

link: <https://www.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=e7a7dc3ebd7f4ad39bb8e485bb64ce44>.

The deadline for this appeal (September 23) falls before the next regularly scheduled City Council meeting. Therefore, Staff is recommending that Council authorize the City Manager to work with Staff and GHD to submit a second appeal to FEMA.

Recommended Action: 1. Receive report regarding FEMA's most recent response and updated FEMA floodplain maps to the City's 2023 appeal letter, and authorize the City Manager to develop and submit a second appeal.
2. Consider and take any other action deemed necessary.

BUDGET AMENDMENT REQUIRED: N/A

CURRENT BUDGET AMOUNT: N/A

PROPOSED BUDGET AMOUNT: N/A

FINANCING SOURCE: N/A

PREVIOUS CONTRACT/PURCHASE ORDER NO.: N/A

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

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

CLIMATE INITIATIVES (CI): N/A

GENERAL PLAN ELEMENTS (GP): N/A

Approved: 
Sage Sangiacomo, City Manager