

# PLANNING ADVISORY BOARD ZONING COMMISSION

**JANUARY 8, 2013**

*Case Number*

ZCA2013-1

*Applicant*

Planning & Community  
Development

*Owners*

City of Great Falls

*Property Location*

Flood Plain Overlay District

*Parcel ID Number*

N/A

*Requested Action*

Approve amendments to  
Land Development Code  
Title 17, as it pertains to the  
Flood Plain Hazard Man-  
agement Regulations Over-  
lay District

*Recommendation*

Approval of the proposed  
amendments

*Project Planner*

Mike Haynes, AICP

## Land Development Code Amendments

### Flood Plain Hazard Management Regulations Overlay District



June 2011 aerial photo courtesy of Great Falls Police Department

## Summary

### **Project Description**

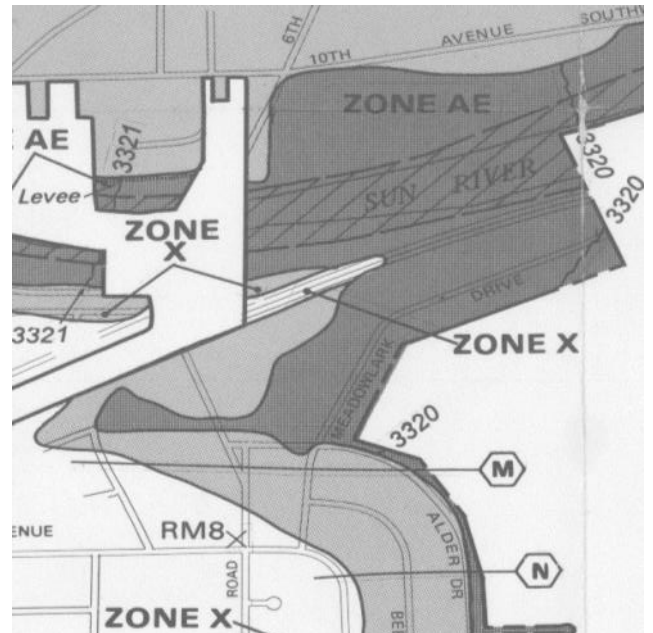
The Land Development Code (LDC) Title 17, as it pertains to the Flood Plain Hazard Management Regulations Overlay District, must be updated to reflect modifications to floodplain management rules made by both the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC). The updates and modifications are meant to ensure compliance with Federal and State flood hazard requirements and the continued participation by the City of Great Falls in the National Flood Insurance Program.

### **Overview**

Through the “Map Modernization Program”, using available Geographic Information Systems (GIS) maps and aerial photography files, FEMA is updating and enhancing its Flood Insurance Study (FIS) and Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM). The current FIS study and FIRM paper maps went into effect on February 15, 2002. The modernization process for our community began in 2006 and ended on January 8, 2012. This included the mandatory 90-day appeals, pro-

test, and comment period. City Staff and community stakeholders participated throughout the entire process to incorporate local needs and provide vital local input into the maps that will become effective March 19, 2013.

The changes reflect the modernization and modifications made by FEMA to the FIS study and FIRM maps that incorporate updates from local flood events, North American Vertical Datum of 1988, additional GIS-based digital information and recent aerial photography. The enhancements provide the ability to manage risks and other development issues within the flood prone areas within the City. Modernization provides citizens, staff and the community a comprehensive approach to disaster mitigation planning, economic development and emergency response. Builders, existing property owners and developers will have updated information for making well-informed decisions on where to build, how they can affect the properties within flood prone areas and property owners flood insurance rates. Insurance agents and lending institutions can use the updated information to manage existing and future risks.



A portion of the 2002 Flood Insurance Map FIRM

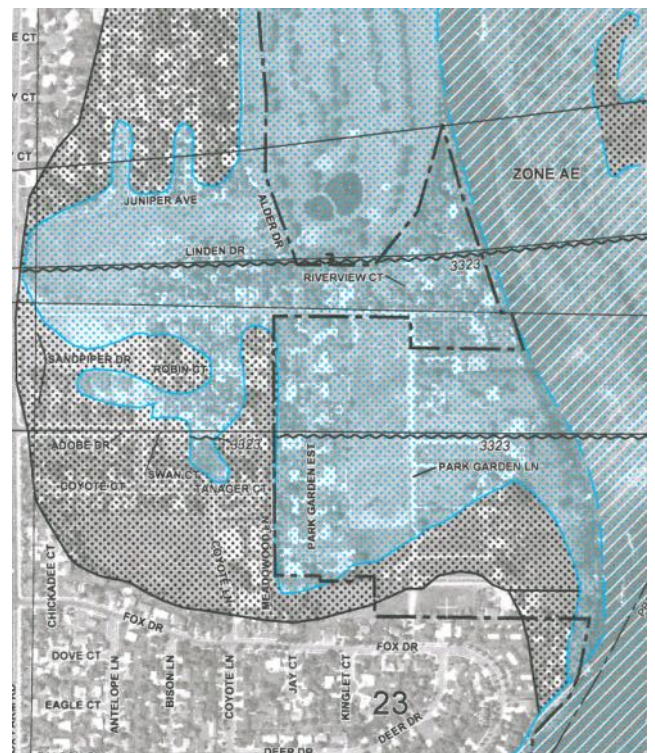
Simultaneously, staff is recommending an update to the Official Municipal Code of the City of Great Falls Land Development Code (LDC) Title 17 as it pertains to the Flood Plain Hazard Management Regulations Overlay District. This update reflects the recommended changes on the minimum procedural and development standards by FEMA and DNRC that our community will maintain our flood insurance rating for the property owners. These amendments include the general housekeeping references for floodplain in the Code. The proposed LDC amendments will consolidate the administration, review, enforcement, and permitting requirements into one chapter. Strict adherence to FEMA and State regulations will facilitate quick floodplain permit approvals. Additionally, the amendments to the City Code and procedures ensure the City's participation in the National Flood Insurance Program.

## Public Notice Requirements

Consistent with statutory public notice requirements, notice of this public hearing was published in the "Legal's" section of the *Great Falls Tribune* on Sunday, December 23, 2012.

## Recommendation:

The Planning Advisory Board, acting as the Zoning Commission, recommends the City Commission adopt the proposed amendments to Title 17 and adopts the Flood Insurance Study (FIS), Digital Flood Insurance Rate Maps (DFIRM) as amended by Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), effective March 19, 2013.



A portion of the Digital Flood Insurance Map DFIRM

## Next Steps:

The recommendation of the Planning Advisory Board/Zoning Commission will be forwarded to the City Commission. City Commission will be asked to consider an Ordinance relating to these amendments to the Land Development Code Title 17.

## Attachments:

Draft Ordinance with attachments for Amendments to Official Code City of Great Falls, Land Development Code, Title 17, as it pertains to the Flood Plain Hazard Management Regulations Overlay District.

Cc: Jim Rearden, Public Works Director  
Dave Dobbs, City Engineer