

Proposed Flood Hazard Determinations for Augusta-Richmond County, Georgia (All Jurisdictions)

The Department of Homeland Security's (DHS's) Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has issued preliminary Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) and Flood Insurance Studies (FISs) reflecting proposed flood hazard determinations within Augusta, GA (and the jurisdictions of Blythe and Hephzibah).

These flood hazard determinations may include the addition or modification of Base Flood Elevations (BFEs), base flood depths, Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) boundaries or zone designations, or additions or modifications to the regulatory floodway.

Technical information or comments are being solicited on the proposed flood hazard determinations shown on the preliminary FIRM and/or FIS report for Augusta, GA. These flood hazard determinations are the basis for the floodplain management measures that our community is required to either adopt or show evidence of being already in effect in order to qualify or remain qualified for participation in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). However, before these determinations are effective for floodplain management purposes, the citizens of Augusta, GA are being provided an opportunity to appeal the proposed information.

A notice was published in the Federal Register June 28, 2018 and the purpose of this notice was to seek general information and comment regarding the preliminary FIRMS, and FIS reports that the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) had previously provided to Augusta GA. The FIRMS and the FIS reports are the basis of the floodplain management measures that Augusta, GA is required either to adopt or show evidence of having in effect in order to qualify or remain qualified for participation in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). In addition, the FIRMS and FIS reports, once effective, will be used by insurance agents and others to calculate appropriate flood insurance premium rates for new policies / existing policies for buildings and the contents of those buildings. The public comments period for the notice posted in the Federal Register is the first phase of new FIRM and FIS adoption and that public comments period expired on September 26, 2018.

Phase Two of the public comments period began with FEMA posting a public notification concerning the appeal process of the FIRMS and FISs in the *Augusta Chronicle* on or about September 13 and September 20, 2018. FEMA also posted a separate notice of the flood hazard determinations on the "Flood Hazard Determinations on the Web" portion of the FEMA website at www.fema.gov/plan/prevent/fhm/bfe. The statutory 90-day period for appeals of the FIRMS and FISs began with the publication of the public notification in the *Augusta Chronicle* on or about September 20, 2018.

During the 90-day appeal period that we are currently under, any owner or lessee of real property in Augusta, GA who believes his or her property rights will be adversely affected by the proposed flood hazard determinations may appeal to the City of Augusta. It is important to note, however, that the sole basis for such appeals is the possession of knowledge or information indicating that the proposed flood hazard determinations are scientifically or technically incorrect. The appeal data must be submitted to FEMA, from the City of Augusta, during the 90-day appeal period. Only appeals of the proposed flood hazard determinations supported by scientific or technical data can be considered by the City of Augusta, or FEMA, before FEMA makes its final determination at the end of the 90-day appeal period.

For more information on the statutory 90-day period provided for appeals, as well as the areas affected, please visit FEMA's website at www.fema.gov/plan/prevent/fhm/bfe, or call the FEMA Map eXchange (FMIX) toll free at 1-877-FEMA MAP (1-877-336-2627).