

FLOOD HAZARD MANAGEMENT SPECIFIC PLAN GUIDELINES

The Flood Hazard Specific Plan (Ordinance No. 172081, effective July 3, 1998) qualifies the City to be in the Regular Status classification of the National Flood Insurance Program. This plan qualifies property owners for greater coverage limits and generally lower flood insurance premium rates. This Information Bulletin, as required by Section 6.D of the Specific Plan, establishes standards necessary to carry out the provisions and intent of the Specific Plan.

A. DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this Bulletin, the following terms are defined as follows:

1. **BOE:** City of Los Angeles Department of Public Works, Bureau of Engineering.
2. **DFIRM:** Digital Flood Insurance Rate Map. Digital map provided by FEMA and used by the City of Los Angeles, to determine the boundaries of the Special Flood Hazard Areas. See http://navigatela.lacity.org/common/mapgallery/pdf/la_flood_haz_map.pdf or <http://zimas.lacity.org/> to determine whether a parcel is located in Special Flood Hazard Area.
3. **Elevation Certificate:** The Elevation Certificate is an important administrative tool to provide elevation information necessary to ensure compliance with the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). The Elevation Certificate may be downloaded from the FEMA website at <http://www.fema.gov/national-flood-insurance-program-2/elevation-certificate>
4. **FEMA:** Federal Emergency Management Agency.
5. **FHMSP:** Flood Hazard Management Specific Plan, Ordinance No. 172081.
6. **Flood-Proofing:** Any combination of structural and non-structural additions, changes or adjustments to structures which prevent flood-related damage to real estate or improved real property, water and sanitary facilities, structures and their contents.
7. **Flood Proofing Certificate:** The Flood Proofing Certificate is an administrative tool to document design information necessary to ensure compliance with the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). The Flood Proofing Certificate may be downloaded from the FEMA website at <http://www.fema.gov/floodplain-management/floodproofing-certificate>
8. **LADBS:** City of Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety.
9. **Market Value:** The value of the structure for which alterations are proposed, including depreciation. This definition is not to be construed to mean the replacement cost. Market Value may be estimated by LADBS as the "Assessed Improvement Value" found in the Los Angeles City Zoning Information web site: <http://zimas.lacity.org/>

10. **Substantial Improvement or Substantial Damage:** Any reconstruction, rehabilitation, addition or other improvement of a structure, the cost of which equals or exceeds 50% of the Market Value of the structure before the start of construction of the improvement. This term includes structures which have incurred substantial damage, regardless of the actual repair work performed.

B. APPLICATION

The following regulations (FEMA Publication 213 and Ord. 172081) apply to all public and private development in the designated special flood hazard area mapped by the City Engineer.

1. No improvements of any kind are permitted in areas designated as Floodways (Ordinance 172081, Section 5.C.2).
2. Projects other than new buildings and Substantial Improvements may be approved without conditions if the Permit Valuation is less than 50% of the Market Value. Documentation to support Market Value shall be attached to the building permit. If the Permit Valuation is over 40% of the Market Value, then the Market Value and Permit Valuation shall be verified and approved by the BOE.
3. Market Value is verified by the BOE using appraisal reports prepared by an appraiser certified in the state of California.
4. Building permits for new buildings or alterations with Permit Valuation in excess of 50% of the building Market Value are considered "Substantial Improvements" and shall fully comply with the requirements of the FHSP.
5. Requests for Modification of Building Ordinances for variations to this specific plan shall be processed with written concurrence from the National Flood Insurance Coordinator, Department of Public Works. Ordinance 172081, Section 9.A.2.

C. CONSTRUCTION LIMITATIONS

The Flood Hazard Specific Plan and FEMA require specific construction limitations based on the location of the development in the Special Hazard Areas (Ordinance 172081, Section 5). Developments located in more than one Special Hazard Area (i.e. floodway, floodprone, and mudflow) shall comply with the requirements for the most restrictive Special Hazard Area in which the development is located. The table below shows the group responsible for review and approval for various development phases.

Table 1 – City Agency Responsibilities			
City Group	Description of Work		
	New Buildings	Additions, Alterations, Reconstructions, and Repair	Non-building structures (except fences) and Grading (not associated with building construction and greater than 50 cubic yards)
Los Angeles Department of Public Works, Bureau of Engineering “BOE”	<p>Review and approve building and site designs for compliance with FHSP and FEMA requirements.</p> <p>Communicate to LADBS the required forces on structures and buildings.</p> <p>Stamp all approved Flood / Elevation Certificates.</p> <p>Require applicant to incorporate approved Certificates onto the building plans.</p> <p>Maintain copies of all required Flood / Elevation Certificates.</p>	<p>Determine Market Value of structure and whether proposed work is a Substantial Improvement.</p> <p>If proposed work is a Substantial Improvement, then see requirements for New Buildings.</p> <p>If it is not a Substantial Improvement, then the work may be approved without conditions.</p>	<p>See requirements for New Buildings.</p> <p>Review site plan to verify that site drainage will not create a flood hazard or affect existing flood prevention systems.</p>

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LADBS Building Plan Check	<p>Identify projects located within the FHSP area and refer to BOE for plan approval.</p> <p>Review structural strength (hydrologic forces) based on criteria set by BOE</p>	<p>Identify project located within the FHSP area.</p> <p>If permit valuation is greater than 40% of Market Value, then refer to BOE for refined Substantial Improvement calculation.</p> <p>If project is a Substantial Improvement, then review structural strength (hydrologic forces) based on criteria set by BOE.</p> <p>Document all approvals without conditions showing calculations when permit valuation is less than 40% of the Market Value.</p>	See requirements for New Buildings.
LADBS Grading Section	Review and approve Geologic Reports for on-site slope stability, foundations, on-site mudflow, and site drainage.	Same as the requirements for New Buildings.	Same as the requirements for New Buildings.

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	New Buildings	Additions, Alterations, Reconstructions, and Repair	Non-building structures (except fences) and Grading (not associated with building construction and greater than 50 cubic yards)
LADBS Inspection	<p>Obtain an elevation survey, or a BOE approved elevation certificate from a licensed surveyor or engineer to verify elevation of the Lowest Finished Floor is at or above elevation established by BOE.</p> <p>Verify Flood Proofing methods per approved plans (if applicable).</p> <p>Obtain clearance from BOE through the Automated Certificate of Occupancy System (ACOS) before a Certificate of Occupancy (CofO) can be issued.</p>	<p>Same as the requirements for New Buildings when a CofO is required.</p> <p>For projects that do not require a CofO, verify Flood Hazard preventive measures per approved plans and as required by BOE.</p> <p>Verify required Flood Elevation / Flood Proofing Certificates are stamped approved by BOE.</p>	<p>Verify Flood Hazard preventive measures per approved plans and as required by BOE.</p> <p>Verify Flood Elevation / Flood Proofing Certificates are stamped and approved by BOE.</p>

The following is a list of the required documents needed for approval by each city agency.

1. Los Angeles Department of Public Works, Bureau of Engineering, (“BOE”)

- a. Site plans, licensed survey maps, LADBS geology reports, Significant Improvement calculation, and other documentation necessary to verify compliance with the FHSP and FEMA construction requirements.
- b. Itemized construction cost estimates prepared by the engineer or architect of record for additions, alterations, repairs, rehabilitations, and reconstructions to complete a Significant Improvement determination for existing buildings.
- c. Appraisal Report prepared by an appraiser certified in the State of California.
- d. Reports by civil engineers or geologists to establish structural design requirements for components of the building and site to withstand hydro-geologic forces pursuant to the FHSP Section 5.C.1 (b), Section 5.C.4 (c), and Section 5.C.6 (a). (For properties located within mudflow areas, mudprone areas, and flood-related erosion hazard areas to determine the extent of the exposure, determine remedies, and to determine that the proposed project will not aggravate existing hazards.)

2. LADBS Grading Section

Reports prepared by licensed geologists or soils engineer pursuant to the FHSP Section 5.C.4(c) and 5.C.6 (a) for properties located within mudflow areas, mudprone areas, and flood-related erosion hazard areas to determine the extent of the exposure, determine remedies and to determine that the proposed project will not aggravate existing hazards.

3. LADBS Structural Plan Check

- a. Structural design drawings and calculations based on loads established by the Department of Public Works.
- b. Building and grading permit applications with designs complying with the FHSP approved by the BOE.

4. LADBS Building Inspection

A BOE approved Flood Proofing Certificate, a BOE approved Elevation Certificate, or an elevation survey map from a licensed surveyor to approve the top of foundations.

D. REPORTING

LADBS is required to submit upon request to the City's Flood Hazard Mitigation Coordinator, all necessary information and report as required under FEMA's National Flood Insurance Program/Community Rating System (NFIP/CRS); (Ordinance 172081, Section 11). Various required reports include, but are not limited to the following:

1. A report of the number of permits issued in Flood Hazard Zones during the bi-annual time period requested by FEMA.
2. A report of the number of waivers that have been applied for and granted in Flood Hazard Zones during the bi-annual time period requested by FEMA.
3. A report of the number of Certificate of Occupancies issued for buildings constructed in Flood Hazard Zones during the bi-annual time period requested by FEMA.