

Question	Webinar Response	Additional Response
\$1180 for insurance - if you're in an AE flood zone?	The average annual policy is in the City is approximately, \$1,180.00. The average includes all FEMA flood insurance policies in the city. Approximately 25% of all FEMA flood insurance policies are on properties outside the Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) or Zone AE, in Alexandria.	
Can we get copies of the slides?	alexandriava.gov/floodmap	
Will any of the city's waterfront redevelopment affect flood risk? (And eventually be reflected on maps?)	Brian was able to answer this one live.	In general, FEMA's goal for communities in regulating development is to a "reasonably safe from flooding" rule. The biggest changes in flood risk come from developing an undeveloped floodplain. In Alexandria, the waterfront is largely fully developed. Incremental changes to properties in the FEMA floodplains generally are to make the property safer, or reduce the risk of flooding. Consideration is made to surrounding areas for effects on the floodplain, however, the land area of the City impacted by the Potomac is a very tiny portion of the shoreline, and small changes to a single property that was previously developed is almost not measureable in the effects of the Potomac's floodplain. But, we require the engineering be completed, in most cases, regardless.
Maps are difficult to see. Can we do this by address? Also, if we are now no longer in Zone AE, can we get a letter from the city to send to our mortgage and insurance companies to get out from under the Insurance.	Click for an interactive map to see the proposed changes (enter a property address to help orient the map): https://tinyurl.com/hepeb8dy I will see if Brian has a response for the second part of your question.	Our office does offer floodplain determinations, however, most lenders and FEMA consider this an opinion and doesn't change the mapping used by FEMA to rate flood insurance. It is always best to acquire an Elevation Certificate (EC) for the property and complete a Letter of Map Amendment (LOMA) application for a possible official map change from FEMA, if the data from the survey bears that out.
What is the significance of the brown areas (0.2% annual chance)? Is flood insurance not required but recommended?	Correct, flood insurance is not required but recommended. This zone is considered to have moderate risk of flooding as defined by FEMA.	
Jessica, Who makes the final determination as to whether or not I am in AE? The proposed new map puts me right on a border. VERY close.	FEMA considers our appeals and provides the final map products.	FEMA's mapping is not perfect and they recognize this. If anyone feels that the boundary may not be 100% correct where it effects their property, they can petition FEMA with a Letter of Map Amendment (LOMA) for free. However, obtaining an Elevation Certificate (EC), not free, will always help, and in most cases will pay for itself in a reduction in policy fee, the first year, if you are paying AE rates.
What if a development is proposed in an area where part of the planned new building will be in the AE zone and part is not?	For the Portion that is in the flood plain the development must be developed consistent with the City's flood plain management ordinance	Usually, FEMA doesn't split policies for the same building. If a portion is in the AE Zone, the entire building is considered in that Zone. Additionally, the City's regulations will be applied equally for any new or substantially improved building even if only a portion is shown in the AE Zone on the maps.
can we get a copy of the presentation	Here is the direct link: https://www.alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/tes/Stormwater/FEMAFloodMapOpenHouse03012021.pdf	
How do we access the PDF of the FEMA-proposed flood map	Hi. All preliminary floodmaps can be found online here: https://www.alexandriava.gov/FloodMap	
Apologies if this was answered already, I heard that the City will provide feedback but nothing on what. What additional information does the City already know is planned for submission (or has already been submitted)?	Is this question related to the appeals process?	The City has reviewed the Preliminary maps and there are some areas shown newly in the AE Zones, where it is not 100% clear where the source of flooding comes from. These areas are usually disconnected from the closest floodplain originating from one of the City's streams and/or rivers. Our comments are of a technical nature, asking for FEMA to more clearly identify the flooding sources and the engineering justification for mapping these areas. If FEMA cannot fully explain the decision to map these flooding "islands", the City will continue to argue for removing them from the maps.
What information and factors does FEMA consider when assigning risk levels? Would stormwater infrastructure improvements (such as the ones the city is now pursuing on an accelerated schedule) affect a FEMA designation?	live answered	FEMA generally does not consider areas of local flooding where the total drainage area of the system is less than 1-square mile. Also, most community's storm sewer systems are not designed to carry the 1%-chance-per-year (100-yr) and as such would be fully flooded for the storm events FEMA considers mapping. The stormwater infrastructure improvements the City is planning on an accelerated schedule will be to bring older networks of pipes up to a 10%-chance-per-year (10-yr) storm and will not be at the level to effect the analysis FEMA considers in their flood risk mapping.
Will the City file any/all appeals for any changes to the mapping? Or do we need to individually send appeals directly to FEMA?	live answered	The City will be submitting comments to FEMA on the Preliminary maps prior to FEMA's appeal period, to occur later this Summer 2021. Residents may submit an appeal if they perceive that modeling or data used to create the map is technically or scientifically incorrect. An appeal must include technical information, such as hydraulic or hydrologic data, to support the claim. Appeals cannot be based on the effects of proposed projects or projects started after the study is in progress. If property owners see incorrect information that does not change the flood hazard information—such as a missing or misspelled road name in the Special Flood Hazard Area or an incorrect corporate boundary—they can submit a written comment.
Will NOAA Atlas 14 rainfall data, or any other rainfall modeling done after the storms of the past two years, be used to influence or alter the current map update?	live answered	FEMA only considers current risks when mapping flood zones for rating insurance. Future risks are not considered, such as eventual climate changes resulting in an increase in intensity and frequency of severe storms. However, FEMA is concerned with future predictions and the results we've experienced based on past predictions and are working toward changes to the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) that reflect a changing climate.
You recommend people to be added to a high risk zone buy flood insurance right away. How long does the financial benefit of doing this last. Just one year?	live answered	Yes, the flood insurance you purchase now in Zone X will remain in effect post map change into Zone AE as long as there is continuous coverage on the property by the same owners. FEMA calls these policies Preferred Risk Policies.
Why the 1983 FEMA update - so soon after the 1981 version?	live answered	Unfortunately, those records are not immediately available.
Is the city considering appeals now	live answered	Yes.
How will the City's future flood mitigation efforts along the river front affect the high risk areas?	live answered	The Waterfront flood mitigation is to the 10%-chance-per-year flood from the Potomac. The improvements will have little effect on the flood risk for the 1%-chance-per-year flood from the Potomac River.
Could Brian perhaps walk through how to read the FEMA map that is searchable by address? It shows my street near a purple-shaded area that indicates "increase in flood extent." Is just the shaded area itself that will be affected by an increase in the rating, or are the homes on either side of the shaded area (but not IN the shaded area) affected by the increase? Thanks.	live answered	Our office can produce area maps that are easy to read and focus on any property in the City. Contact Stormwater Management for more information.
Can you better explain what it would mean to bring a substantially modified property (that basement) at least one foot above BFE?	live answered	To be properly compliant with the City's floodplain ordinance and the NFIP minimum standards, new or substantially improved buildings must have the lowest floor set to at least 1-foot above the Base Flood Elevation (BFE). In some instances, an older building with a below ground basement that is substantially improved, may be required to abandon and fill the basement to be in compliance.
Is FEMA updating the flood maps for Arlington, Fairfax County, Washington DC, Montgomery County, Prince George's County at the same time as Alexandria's?	live answered	All communities in the FEMA Region III Mid-Potomac-Anacostia-Occoquan Watershed were part of this map update. Schedules are staggered depending on community needs. An interactive map with community status is available here: http://www.arcgis.com/home/webmap/viewer.html?webmap=6331cc6b45734c4eabfde6102d5fc0b1&extent=-148.9197,13.1588,-46.0876,55.5312

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Is Alexandria doing anything to improve its community rating score (for example, get to 5 or 4)?	live answered	The City is currently holds a CRS rating of Class 6. Efforts are underway to earn additional credit points to get to a Class 5.
Has the city made any progress in being designated by FEMA to authorize Flood Proofing Certificates?	live answered	It was thought that this question was related to special consideration for below Base Flood Elevation areas, or basements, in Residential buildings that could be floodproofed and certified safe by the community. FEMA only authorizes certain communities to permit floodproofing of these areas if they are deemed "safe rooms" specially designed to withstand extreme weather such as tornados, and are not used as habitable space. Alexandria is not in an area where such events occur and is not able to be authorized by FEMA to permit residential floodproofed space. However, the authorization for permitting floodproofed areas is for certified floodproofing that is credited towards flood insurance costs. By city ordinance, anyone may floodproof their property to protect their investments. However, there is no consideration by FEMA to rate residential properties in the high hazard zones differently due to any floodproofing. In other words, there is no flood insurance discount for floodproofing residential properties in the high risk zones.
I believe so - related to the 90-day comment period. I did hear that he mentioned the City could submit feedback prior to that 90-day period which is why I included the part about anything already submitted. Interested in knowing more about what the City would like ammended on the proposed maps.	live answered	The comments sent to FEMA prior to the start of the appeals period will be posted on the City's website. Check alexandriava.gov/floodaction for updates.
Do the new maps account for projected climate changes?	live answered	FEMA uses these maps for rating insurance policies and is only interested in the current risks of today. Future risks are not included in rating flood insurance policies.
Can you make Brian's lovely face smaller so the square with the map is bigger?	Might you be able to change the view in your Zoom settings? I am not able to change the view from here.	Apologies for not showing the map larger. Maps are viewable from the city's website at alexandriava.gov/floodmap and also viewable from FEMA's website at https://www.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=e7a7dc3ebd7f4ad39bb8e485bb64ce44
Not a question but a recommendation for everyone - if the city is only providing protection against nuisance (minor) flooding and you live near a river or creek, you should definitely buy flood insurance or have savings available to repair damages to your structure and goods. Flood damages can cost in the 10's of thousands of dollars. Better be safe than sorry.	Thank you	Good advice. FEMA has shown that 1" of flooding inside your home can cost up to \$20,000.00 in damage. FEMA has also shown that up to 20% of all flood insurance claims come from properties outside the high hazard zones.
Does city infrastructure factor into FEMA flood mapping updates? If so, how?	The City infrastructure does not factor into FEMA floodmapping updates.	
Is it worth getting flood insurance if you're not in a flood plain, but you're affected by the flash floods?	The City supports people not in the floodplain to get flood insurance, especially if they have experienced flooding in the past. It is important for homeowners to understand what is and isn't covered. You can learn more at https://www.fema.gov/flood-insurance .	Yes, flood insurance cost much less if your home is not mapped in the FEMA high hazard flood zone, such as Zone AE. And if you have a low cost flood insurance policy before your property is remapped into a high hazard zone, you can keep your low cost rates for as long as you maintain continuous coverage.
And the pdf please.... didn't get it.	The PDF maps are here: https://www.alexandriava.gov/FloodMap The direct link to the presentation https://www.alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/tes/Stormwater/FEMAFloodMapOpenHouse03012021.pdf	
How do we access the PDF that was posted?	The preliminary maps are available at https://www.alexandriava.gov/FloodMap .	also viewable from FEMA's website at https://www.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=e7a7dc3ebd7f4ad39bb8e485bb64ce44
Has the city made any progress in being designated to authorize Flood Proofing Certificates?	This was answered live. Thank you!	
will there be future calls about city storm sewer improvement plans? curious about what, if anything, is planned along martha custis drive near 4 mile run.	Those will take place separately. We're working with neighborhoods and will be putting up more information on the City's website.	
We are currently in Zone AE (highest). Will there be any changes to the area of this zone?	With these updates some properties are now mapped in the floodplain and some properties are now mapped out of the floodplain.	The City has just recently sent letters to every property owner currently in Zone AE and everyone effected by the map change with details of how the map changes wil affect you. If you feel that you should have received a letter, but didn't get one, please contact Stormwater Management (7037466499, stormwater@alexandriava.gov)
In the redrawing of the maps, is there an reduction of existing flood zones or only expansion? Thanks	With these updates some properties are now mapped in the floodplain and some properties are now mapped out of the floodplain. We will be going over how to see if your property is mapped in or out of the floodplain. There has been an overall expansion to the floodplain area with these updates.	Approximately 370 properties were added, 60 removed and 1,300 remaining in the AE Zones.
This appears to be about flooding from streams, the river, etc - what about sewer backup/overflow?	Yes, this is the regulated floodplain as determined by FEMA and the map updates are being done by FEMA. This is not associated with localized flooding.	
I came in late. Did you address the difference between FEMA flood plain and flooding caused by Alexandrias lack of infrastructure to handle sewage and stormwater.	Yes. The FEMA regulated floodplain and this remapping effort is associated with the regulated floodplain. Flash flooding can occur outside of the regulated floodplain.	FEMA maps areas with a contributing drainage area of 1-square mile or greater susceptible to at least 1-foot of inundation for the 1%-chance-per-year flood for the rating of flood insurance policies. FEMA is not involved in local stormwater or sanitary sewer management.
Jessica,	N/A	
Nope.	N/A	
Can someone speak to the Hoofs Run watershed - i.e. a) will the deep tunnel project currently underway improve conditions, and b) if not, what options are there to help with the basement flooding occurring in so much of Del Ray lately?		AlexRenew's tunnel project is only to expand the capacity of the Combined Sewer System located primarily in Old Town. This work will have no effect on sanitary and storm sewers in Del Ray. The City is continuing the Inflow & Infiltration program through the Sanitary Sewers group to reduce the flow of stormwater into separate sanitary sewers in these effected areas.
Do you have any information about FEMA 2.0--what the differences might be in the rating system?		FEMA's Risk Rating 2.0 program is slowly rolling out and not much information is currently available. Please see FEMA's website for more information: https://www.fema.gov/flood-insurance/work-with-nfip/risk-rating
Why is he mowing his lawn on his island?		Life can return to normal when you are reasonably safe from flooding.
Does FEMA provide a report or assessment for their maps? Such as, Hooffs Run mainly floods due to infrastructure constraints rather than tidal issues or a large river changing course or hurricanes. Do they determine what is the root cause for Hooffs Run flooding?		FEMA produces the Flood Insurance Study to accompany the maps. There is specific information for each flooding source detailed in the document which can be found on the City's website: https://www.alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/tes/Stormwater/515519V0008.pdf

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Sorry if you already addressed this - I joined late - do I apply for flood insurance from my current provider of homeowners insurance or from someone else?		Most providers of Homeowner's insurance can help you with flood insurance. You may also find another agent specializing in flood insurance on FEMA's website: https://www.floodsmart.gov/flood-insurance/providers
OK. Who on the City staff should I contact for a definitive position to take forward to FEMA?		Our office does offer floodplain determinations, however, most lenders and FEMA consider this an opinion and doesn't change the mapping used by FEMA to rate flood insurance. It is always best to acquire an Elevation Certificate (EC) for the property and complete a Letter of Map Amendment (LOMA) application for a possible official map change from FEMA (free for single residential properties), if the data from the survey bears that out.
Is the underground Timber Branch culvert (from Junior & W. Glendale down to Hoof's Run) clear, or relatively clear? Soon to be tied in to a new one running south under Russell Road?		Public Works Services is actively investigating the condition of this area.
looks like no proposed expansion of flood area along potomac river/ alex coastline?	N/A	
Were you required by FEMA to adopt any floodway mapping with this update?	N/A	
If FEMA looks at existing risk, why aren't the flash floods included in their assessment? We've had three in the past 1.5 years, and another about 12-15 years ago.		FEMA's risk maps are developed using the determined 1%-chance-per-year flood event over a drainage area of at least 1-square mile. FEMA realizes that this approach does not account for all situations. For that reason, flood insurance is available to all residents of communities that participate in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).
what are those areas	N/A	
Flood risk overall is higher than fire risk. It's why the NFIP program exists - because private insurance companies were refusing to insure because it's too risky and not a viable investment for them. Insurance helps your and our community's resiliency.	N/A	
Is the underground culvert running south under Russell Road really going to happen? Will our Timber Branch culvert tie into it?		The Cit Manager's budget for FY2022-FY2031, which includes \$60M for the Timber Branch Bypass of Hooffs Run. Design will begin this July 2021 (start of FY2022). Construction will be fully funded in 2025. City Council is expected to approve and adopt this budget.
please explain the map and the legend after a resident search their home	N/A	
Again, a list of documents (including technical reports) would help.		All of FEMA's published maps and reports for Alexandria are available on the city's website at alexandriava.gov/floodmap and on FEMA's Flood Map Service Center website at https://msc.fema.gov/portal/home
Nice job. Thank you.		Thank you!
Much appreciated. Thank you!		Thank you!
VERY helpful, thanks!!		Thank you!
good to see you again Brian		Thank you!
Excellent briefing - thanks (from a retired USGS scientist)!		Thank you!