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October 5, 2017

SUBJECT: COUNTY ADVISORY FLOOD STUDY MAP POLICY

Background

The County of Hawai'i periodically funds and/or initiates County flood studies on the island in its efforts to assess the flood risk in flood prone areas and to improve the accuracy of the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM). This is to promote the public health, safety, general welfare, and to minimize public and private losses due to flood conditions. Prior to engaging in any future County funded and/or County-initiated flood studies, the County of Hawai'i will notify the community of its intention and collect the community's input. Project status and updates will be posted on our County of Hawai'i Flood Awareness Website.

A County advisory flood study map is the resultant flood hazard map from the County funded and/or County initiated flood study which is intended to be utilized to revise the FIRM. However, because these maps have not been submitted to FEMA for technical review and the FIRM map revision process has not been initiated, they shall be considered informational.

A County advisory flood study map shall not be confused with the following regulatory flood studies and maps:

- FEMA's Effective Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM). This is the official map of a community on which FEMA has delineated both the special hazard areas and the risk premium zones applicable to the community. An effective FIRM is used by insurance companies and lenders to establish rates for flood insurance on properties with federally backed mortgages or loans. For more information on this, visit <https://www.fema.gov/flood-insurance-rate-map-firm>. This includes FEMA approved Letter of Map Revisions.
- FEMA's Preliminary Flood Hazard Data (Preliminary Data). Preliminary data is presented as the best information available at this time and include new or revised Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs), Flood Insurance Study (FIS) reports, and FIRM Databases. For more information on this, visit <https://www.fema.gov/view-your-communitys-preliminary-flood-hazard-data-0>.

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- A flood study as required by Hawai'i County Code (HCC), Chapter 27, Section 27-24 to be used to determine Base Flood Elevations (BFE) in the general floodplain, Zone A. These flood studies are typically done for single lot developments as a condition of the building permit process.
- A flood study as required for subdivisions, as described in HCC, Chapter 27, Section 27-20.
- A flood study as required for improvements adjacent to drainage facilities, as described in HCC, Chapter 27, Section 27-25.

POLICY

A County advisory flood study map shall be used for informational purposes only. It will not be used for regulatory purposes. It is recommended, but not required, that proposed development be built in compliance with these advisory maps.

Should you have any questions, please contact Bryce Harada of the Engineering Division at (808) 961-8042.



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