REPORT TO COUNCIL
City of Sacramento

915 I Street, Sacramento, CA 95814-2604
www. CityofSacramento.org

Staff Report
October 23, 2007

Honorable Mayor and
Members of the City Council

Title: AR Flood Zone Application to FEMA for the Natomas Basin

Location/Council District: District 1 (Location Map-Attachment 2)

Recommendation: Adopt a Resolution 1) authorizing the City Manager to submit an application to FEMA for a federal Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) designation of AR within the Natomas Basin and 2) direct staff to return to Council with a proposed Ordinance or other appropriate measure to require developers to pay for a policy of flood insurance sold pursuant to the National Flood Insurance Program for a period to be determined from the date of close of escrow for all newly constructed, City residences within the Natomas Basin.

Contact: Gary Reents, Director of Utilities, (916) 808-1433, David Brent, Engineering Manager, (916) 808-1420, David Schamber, Supervising Engineer (916) 808-1423, Connie Perkins, Associate Engineer, (916) 808-1914

Presenters: Gary Reents, David Brent

Department: Utilities

Division: Engineering Services

Organization No: 3330

Description/Analysis

Issue: On June 21, 2007, City Council adopted a Resolution authorizing the City Manager to submit a joint FIRM A99 application with Sacramento and Sutter Counties to FEMA for the Natomas Basin. In a letter dated September 27, 2007, FEMA has concluded that the Natomas Basin is not currently eligible for an A99 flood insurance zone designation but notes that the Natomas Basin project appears to meet the basic criteria for an AR flood insurance zone designation. An application with additional information must be submitted in order for FEMA to make a final determination on the AR Zone. FEMA has directed the City and Counties to submit an AR application by October 25th.

Staff further recommends (in addition to applying for the AR zone designation) that the City Council take further action and mandate federal flood insurance on all new Natomas Basin residential projects within the City while the FEMA application is pending and the subsequent final mapping process is completed. This action is not a federal requirement during the application and mapping process. However, Staff believes that this is a prudent action at this time.

Policy Considerations: This action is consistent with the Council focus areas of Public Safety, Economic Development and Sustainability and Livability. An AR Zone would place certain restrictions on new buildings in the Natomas Basin and would make flood insurance mandatory for properties with federally backed mortgages.

Environmental Considerations: This recommendation does not constitute a "project" and therefore is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Commission/Committee Action: None required.

Rationale for Recommendation: In its September 27, 2007 letter to the City and Counties, FEMA has given the local authorities the option of applying for the AR Zone designation.

Financial Considerations: No additional City funding is required.

Emerging Small Business Development (ESBD): No goods or services are requested with this report.

Respectfully Submitted by: _____
David L. Brent, Division Manager

Approved by: _____
for Gary A. Reents, Director of Utilities

Recommendation Approved:

for _____
Ray Kerridge
City Manager

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Attachment 1

Background

The Natomas Basin (Basin) is bounded on the south by the north levee of the American River, on the west by the east levee of the Sacramento River, on the north by the south levee of the Natomas Cross Canal and on the east by the west levee of the Natomas East Main Drainage Canal (NEMDC). The Basin (Attachment 2) includes portions of the City of Sacramento, Sacramento County and Sutter County (City and Counties).

A full description of the flood protection system protecting the Natomas Basin and the sequence of events that have led to this latest round of FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) remapping in the Basin were described in detail in the June 21, 2007 staff report for the A99 flood zone application and are not reiterated in this report. The June 21st staff report is attached for reference (Attachment 3).

In a letter to the City and Counties, dated September 27, 2007, FEMA responded to the A99 application and concluded that the Natomas Basin is not currently eligible for the A99 zone designation until further progress is made toward restoring the 100-year flood protection (Attachment 4). FEMA did indicate that the general requirements appear to be met for AR Zone designation. However, additional documentation is required to meet all of the conditions of the AR regulations. FEMA provided a checklist of items the City and Counties would need to provide for an AR application and instructed the applicants to use this checklist in preparing an application for the Basin as an AR Zone. In a letter dated October 10, 2007, (Attachment 5) FEMA stated that the AR application must be received by October 25, 2007.

In a subsequent meeting with FEMA and Army Corps of Engineers staff on October 17th, it was concluded that some of the checklist items for the AR application would not be ready for inclusion in the October 25th application package. FEMA staff has agreed to accept the incomplete application and has indicated that they would publish draft, preliminary flood hazard maps by November 15th showing the AR zone with an understanding that the additional information to complete the application would be submitted prior to the close of the 90-day appeal period March 8, 2008.

Also at this meeting FEMA and the Corps agreed that the Natomas Levee Improvement Project – Phase 1 (defined as the phase of the project that restores the 100-year protection) was a local project being managed by SAFCA and paid for with State and local funds. This decision requires that the project be completed in 5-years as opposed to 10-years if it were a federal project. Importantly, by defining this as a local project, certain information that the Corps would otherwise have provided in the application process can now be provided by SAFCA.

While staff believes FEMA's denial of the A99 zone was inconsistent with past precedent and doesn't represent the communities' ongoing and tireless efforts to improve flood protection, we do not recommend appealing the decision. The City will have the option to reapply for the A99 Zone once SAFCA completes applicable milestones.

Contrary to some reports, the denial of A99 will not affect mandatory flood insurance rates as the cost of flood insurance in the Natomas Basin will be nearly the same whether or not the Basin is mapped into an A99, AR or more restrictive flood zones.

The major consequence of the A99 denial is that federally imposed building restrictions of some sort will be imposed in the Natomas Basin. If FEMA approves the AR designation, building restrictions will essentially prevent development outside of the "developed area" as defined by National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) regulations. Within the developed area, NFIP regulations require that new residential structures be elevated 3 feet above the highest adjacent grade and commercial structures be elevated or flood proofed to 3 feet. This restriction, if imposed ,will limit, if not halt, infill development in the Natomas area of the City. The potential economic impacts of such a restriction are widespread and touch many sectors of the local economy.

Development restrictions in the Natomas Basin would have significant impacts on debt financed infrastructure improvement districts, the real estate market, and City discretionary tax revenues:

- Builders and developers could suspend payments on existing infrastructure improvement bonds.
    - This could result in not making debt payments to bond holders.
    - The City's credit rating could be lower making it more expensive and difficult for the City to issue debt.
- In addition, there would be reductions in sales tax on construction supplies and materials, electronic equipment, and other items associated with new homes and new home buyers.

Since flooding in the Natomas Basin could reach depths of greater than 10 feet and from an insurance standpoint structures would be a total loss whether or not they were elevated 3 feet, staff believes this requirement is unnecessary and not commensurate with the potential economic impacts. Staff recommends that City and Counties pursue a waiver of this restriction. This recommendation would not be part of the application nor is it an action we are asking City Council to take as part of this item.

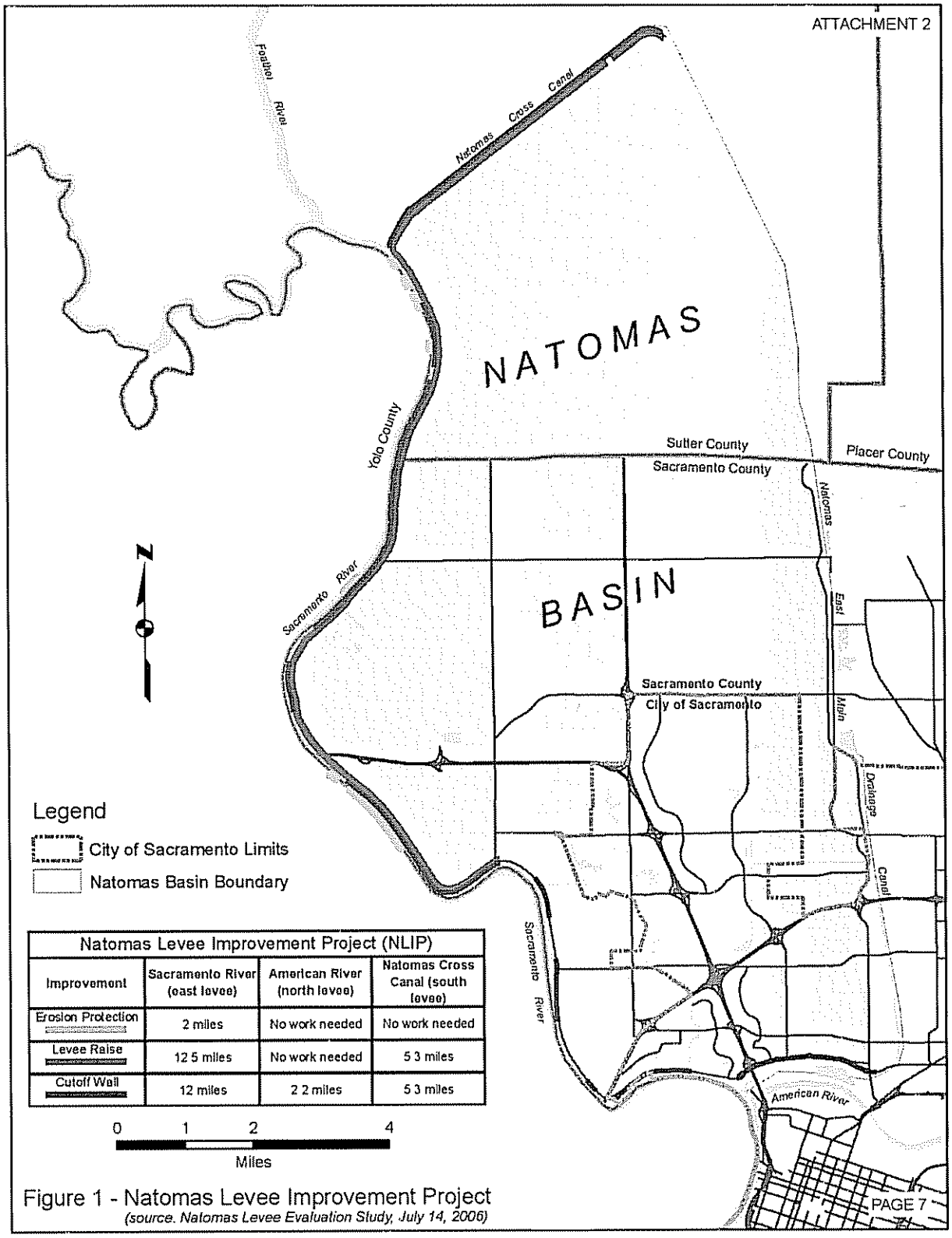
Beyond the submittal of the application and the issuance of the draft, preliminary maps, FEMA's schedule for the remapping process results in final, effective Flood Insurance Rate Maps in December 2008. The detailed schedule is a s follows:

- October 25, 2007 – AR application/data submitted to FEMA
- November 15, 2007 – FEMA issues draft, preliminary Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM)
- December 2 and 9, 2007 – FEMA posts BFE (base flood elevation) notices in two (2) newspaper ads
- December 9, 2007 – Appeal period begins
- March 8, 2008 – Appeal period ends
- April 8, 2008 – FEMA resolves appeals
- June 2, 2008 – FEMA issues letter of final determination

- December 2, 2008 – New FIRM's become effective

During this remapping process the FEMA flood zone designation in the Natomas Basin remains a shaded X Zone until the maps become effective in December 2008. The shaded X Zone imposes no building restrictions and flood insurance is voluntary. While City Council has the option to take interim measures regarding development, there is no NFIP mandate to do so nor is flood insurance mandated until the maps are effective in December 2008

Staff recommends that during this interim period, City Council continue to allow infill development with a requirement that developers pay for a policy of flood insurance sold pursuant to the National Flood Insurance Program for a period to be determined from the date of close of escrow for all newly constructed residences within the City limits of the Natomas Basin.



Natomas Levee Improvement Project (NLIP)			
Improvement	Sacramento River (east levee)	American River (north levee)	Natomas Cross Canal (south levee)
Erosion Protection	2 miles	No work needed	No work needed
Levee Raise	12 5 miles	No work needed	5 3 miles
Cutoff Wall	12 miles	2 2 miles	5 3 miles

Figure 1 - Natomas Levee Improvement Project
(source. Natomas Levee Evaluation Study, July 14, 2006)

Attachment 3

REPORT TO COUNCIL
City of Sacramento

33

915 I Street, Sacramento, CA 95814-2604
www. CityofSacramento org

Staff

June 21, 2007

Honorable Mayor and
Members of the City Council

Title: City Council Authorization to Submit Remap Application to FEMA for the Natomas Basin

Location/Council District: District 1

Recommendation: Adopt a Resolution authorizing the City Manager to submit a joint A99 Flood Zone application with Sacramento and Sutter Counties to FEMA for the Natomas Basin.

Contact: Gary Reents, Director, 808-1433; Dave Brent, Division Manager, 808-1420; David Schamber, Supervising Engineer, 808-1423

Presenters: Gary Reents & Dave Brent

Department: Utilities

Division: Engineering Services

Organization No: 3330

Description/Analysis

Issue: The City of Sacramento, Sacramento County and Sutter County received letters from FEMA, dated December 29, 2006, in which FEMA informed the communities of the necessity to update the existing Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) for the Natomas Basin. This FIRM revision would result in the entire Basin being placed in a regulatory Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA). FEMA's original schedule was to issue a preliminary FIRM revision by April 2007 and a final, revised FIRM by November 2007. Meetings with FEMA over the last several months to discuss the remapping process has resulted in FEMA agreeing to delay the map revisions to allow for more certainty as to State and local funding for the Natomas Levee Improvement Project. FEMA's new remapping schedule requires the local agencies to submit a remap application by May 15, 2007 with a subsequent effective map date occurring early in 2008. Consistent with past applications to FEMA, City staff is recommending that City Council approve an A99 Zone application to FEMA. Staff from Sacramento and Sutter Counties are recommending their respective Boards approve this same A99 Zone application.

Policy Considerations: This action is consistent with the City Council focus areas of Public Safety, Economic Development and Sustainability and Livability. An A99 Zone designation allows City Council continued discretion regarding landuse decisions in the Natomas area.

Environmental Considerations: This recommendation does not constitute a "project" and therefore is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Commission/Committee Action: None required

Rationale for Recommendation: Since 1986, FEMA has twice approved the City of Sacramento's application for an A99 designation based on adequate progress of the flood control system. The current situation is consistent with these prior designations.

Financial Considerations: No additional City funding is required.

Emerging Small Business Development (ESBD): No goods or services are requested with this report.

Respectfully Submitted by: _____
Dave L. Brent, Division Manager

Approved by: _____
Gary A. Reents, Director of Utilities

Recommendation Approved:

_____
Gus Vina, Assistant City Manager for Ray Kerridge - 6/13/07

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Attachment 1

Background

The Natomas Basin (Basin) is bounded on the south by the north levee of the American River, on the west by the east levee of the Sacramento River, on the north by the south levee of the Natomas Cross Canal and on the east by the west levee of the Natomas East Main Drainage Canal (NEMDC). The Basin includes portions of the City of Sacramento, Sacramento County and Sutter County (City and Counties).

Providing flood protection for the Natomas Basin is one component of the ongoing flood control plan for the greater Sacramento area to provide 200-year protection to the region. As the City and the two Counties work to achieve 200-year protection, the regulatory flood zone designation for the Basin has been a continual work in progress.

Improving the levees that protect the City and the Basin began following the record storms of 1986 after which the Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) recertified the levee systems protecting the Sacramento urban area. In 1989, the Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency (SAFCA) was formed, funded and embarked on its stated goal of achieving a minimum of 200-year level of flood protection for Sacramento. Since that time, SAFCA in partnership with the Corps and the State has a spent over $300 million in levee improvements and other flood control enhancements. These ongoing efforts have resulted in the restoration of a minimum of a 100-year level of flood protection for most of the Sacramento urban area.

In 1998, after a significant portion of the Natomas Basin project had been completed, the Corps certified the levees as providing 100-year protection for the Basin. The work didn't stop there and as part of the ongoing flood control project for the Natomas Basin, SAFCA conducted a study to evaluate the Natomas levee system and determine the improvements needed to provide the Basin with at least 200-year level of protection. SAFCA compiled the results of the study in a report entitled Natomas Levee Evaluation Study, dated March 13, 2006. SAFCA's study concluded that selected reaches of the levee system, certified in 1998, failed to meet freeboard criteria based on new hydraulic modeling and failed to meet new criteria for underseepage. In addition, several erosion sites have developed since the 1998 certification. In a letter dated July 20, 2006, the Corps concurred with SAFCA's findings and informed FEMA that they would no longer support their 1998 certification of these levees.

Construction elements identified in the SAFCA report to address freeboard, underseepage and erosion are collectively referred to as the Natomas Levee Improvement Project (NLIP).

The NLIP consists of two phases. SAFCA estimates that Phase 1 will cost approximately $260 million and when completed will provide 100-year level of flood protection for the Basin. SAFCA estimates that Phase 2 will cost an additional $154 million and when completed will provide 200-year level of flood protection. The total estimated cost for Phases 1 and 2 is $414 million. Funding for Phase 1 is secured through a combination of Federal, State and local funds and includes: (1) Federal funding of approximately $6

million, (2) State funding of approximately $180 million and (3) local funding of approximately $74 million authorized by SAFCA through the successful passage on April 26, 2007 of the local assessment district. Development fees being contemplated by SAFCA are not required to fund Phase 1 of the project. SAFCA estimates that Phase 1 will be completed in 2010 and Phase 2 will be completed in 2012.

Referencing the Corps July 20th letter, FEMA, in letters dated December 29, 2006, to the City and the two counties, stated their plans to revise the community's existing Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) for the Natomas Basin. The FIRM revision would place the entire Basin in an unspecified Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA). Since receiving the December 29, 2006, staff from the three local agencies has worked closely with the FEMA regional office and it has been agreed upon that the three local agencies will submit a joint map revision application by May 15, 2007.

Knowing that SAFCA and the local agencies have been proactive in identifying needed flood control projects and have been actively working on securing funding, FEMA has agreed that the application process will move forward after the outcome of the SAFCA assessment vote and with the presumption that State Measure 1E bond funds will be authorized as part of the official adoption of the State budget and through funding agreements with the Department of Water Resources (DWR) and SAFCA. This presumption is key to the application for the A99 designation as a project must be 100 percent authorized to qualify for the A99 determination. As noted previously, SAFCA anticipates that the State of California will provide approximately $180 million of funding for Phase 1 by appropriation of Measure 1E monies over the length of Phase 1 construction. Presently, the State's budget for fiscal year 2007-2008 shows a commitment of $37.5 million for Phase 1 and SAFCA is working on obtaining an agreement with the State indicating the State's intent of funding the balance of the $180 million in succeeding years.

Consistent with past City applications to FEMA, staff recommends that Council apply for an A99 flood zone designation. In reviewing the Federal regulations for flood zone designations, it is evident that the City and Counties meet the intent of the A99 regulation. Some of the key items required to qualify for A99 status include the following:

1. 100% of the total financial project cost of the completed flood protection system has been authorized.

2. At least 60% of the total financial project cost of the completed flood protection system has been appropriated.

3. At least 50% of the total financial project cost of the complete flood protection system has been expended.

4. All critical features of the flood protection system are under construction and each critical feature is 50% completed as measured by the actual expenditure.

5. The community has not been responsible for any delay in the completion of the flood protection system

In the City's previous A99 applications, FEMA has concurred that inclusion of existing Federal and local flood control facilities and projects, which provide protection to the Natomas Basin, apply to the appropriated and expended criteria noted in items 2 and 3 above. Specifically, the existing flood control infrastructure including the original levees, constructed with the Sacramento River Flood Control Project, and other project work accomplished such as the Sacramento Urban Area Levee Reconstruction Project, North Area Local Project, Sacramento Bank Protection Project and the American River Common Features Project are all part of the ongoing and long-term plan for flood control for the Natomas Basin. Combining the existing flood control infrastructure costs with the NLIP costs yields an appropriation exceeding 60% and an expenditure exceeding 50% of funds for the completed flood protection system. Since the existing levees protecting the Basin are the critical features of the project, the expenditure percentage, which exceeds 50%, represents the percentage of critical features completed.

As noted above, the community has a long history of prioritizing flood control and supporting needed levee improvements as demonstrated by the overwhelming support and passage of local assessments in 2000 and the recently passed 2007 SAFCA assessment. This financial commitment and the City Council's long standing priority on flood control have assured that the community has never been responsible for any delay in the completion of the flood protection system as required in item 5 above.

The A99 zone will make flood insurance mandatory for property owners in the Natomas Basin. There are no federal building restrictions mandated by the A99 designation. With the presumption of adequate funding and FEMA's willingness to work with the local agencies in anticipation of this funding, the proposed application is consistent with the intent of the A99 criteria. It is also an appropriate designation given Sacramento's proactive, ongoing, flood control program that has identified deficiencies in the existing Natomas Basin levee system in advance of FEMA's national program mandating levee assessments and recertifications.

Attachment 2

RESOLUTION NO.

Adopted by the Sacramento City Council

A99 FLOOD ZONE APPLICATION TO FEMA FOR THE NATOMAS BASIN

BACKGROUND

A. SAFCA and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers have determined that the existing levees surrounding the Natomas Basin no longer provide 100-year flood protection.

B. FEMA in letters to the City, Sacramento County and Sutter County, dated December 29, 2006, stated their intent of remapping the Natomas Basin into a Special Flood Hazard Zone.

C. FEMA, working with City and Counties staff, has agreed to let the City and Counties submit a remapping application by May 15, 2007.

D. City meets the intent of the regulations for A99 flood zone designation, but will need some special consideration from FEMA in regards to the timing of available funds for the Natomas Levee Improvement Project.

E. The City and Counties application for A99 is consistent with previous FEMA determinations of A99 requirements in Sacramento.

F. It is anticipated that the Board of Supervisors for Sacramento and Sutter Counties will support the A99 Zone application to FEMA.

BASED ON THE FACTS SET FORTH IN THE BACKGROUND, THE CITY COUNCIL RESOLVES AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1 City Council supports the joint application with Sacramento and Sutter Counties to FEMA for an A99 flood zone designation for the Natomas Basin. City Council authorizes the City Manager to submit a joint A99 application to FEMA and City Council requests the A99 designation from FEMA.

RESOLUTION NO. 2007-432

Adopted by the Sacramento City Council

June 21. 2007

A99 FLOOD ZONE APPLICATION TO FEMA FOR THE NATOMAS BASIN

BACKGROUND

A SAFCA and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers have determined that the existing levees surrounding the Natomas Basin no longer provide 100-year flood protection

B. FEMA in letters to the City, Sacramento County and Sutter County, dated December 29, 2006, stated their intent of remapping the Natomas Basin into a Special Flood Hazard Zone.

C. FEMA, working with City and Counties staff, has agreed to let the City and Counties submit a remapping application by May 15, 2007.

D City meets the intent of the regulations for A99 flood zone designation, but will need some special consideration from FEMA in regards to the timing of available funds for the Natomas Levee Improvement Project

E. The City and Counties application for A99 is consistent with previous FEMA determinations of A99 requirements in Sacramento

F It is anticipated that the Board of Supervisors for Sacramento and Sutter Counties will support the A99 Zone application to FEMA.

BASED ON THE FACTS SET FORTH IN THE BACKGROUND, THE CITY COUNCIL RESOLVES AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1 City Council supports the joint application with Sacramento and Sutter Counties to FEMA for an A99 flood zone designation for the Natomas Basin. City Council authorizes the City Manager to submit a joint A99 application to FEMA and City Council requests the A99 designation from FEMA

Adopted by the City of Sacramento City Council on June 21, 2007 by the following vote:

Ayes: Councilmembers, Fong, Hammond, McCarty, Pannell, Sheedy, Tretheway, and Waters

Noes: None

Abstain: None.

Absent: Mayor Fargo and Councilmember Cohn.

Kevin McCarty, Vice Mayor

Attest:

Shirley Concolino, City Clerk

Attachment 4

U.S. Department of Homeland Security
500 C Street SW
Washington DC 20472

FEMA

September 27, 2007

Mr. Ray Kerridge
City Manager
City of Sacramento
1395 35th Avenue
Sacramento, California 95822-2911

Dear Mr. Kerridge:

Thank you for your letter dated June 29, 2007, sent to Ms. Sally Ziolkowski, Director of the Mitigation Division, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Region IX, Department of Homeland Security. The area known as the Natomas Basin has recently been identified as protected by a levee which the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) has recently decertified. Your letter formally requested that this area known as the Natomas Basin receive a Zone A99 flood designation on your community's Flood Insurance Rate Map. You provided narrative and financial documentation to support this request, as required by Title 44 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Section 61.12 (44 CFR Section 61.12).

Both FEMA Region IX and FEMA Headquarters (HQ) have discussed the submission with representatives of the City of Sacramento, Sacramento County and Sutter County, as well as the Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency (SAFCA). FEMA has carefully reviewed the submission and considered these discussions in making a determination in accordance with 44 CFR Section 61.12. Based on these considerations, the Natomas Basin is not eligible for a Zone A99 designation.

44 CFR Section 61.12 refers to the flood protection system and the costs associated with it. In the case of a levee restoration project, the restoration project alone is considered the "flood protection system" as referenced in the regulations. Therefore, the adequate progress criteria must be measured solely against the restoration project total projected cost. Therefore, 100 % of the cost of the restoration project must be authorized, 60 % must be appropriated and 50% must be expended in order to meet 44 CFR Section 61.12 (b).

The goal of Phase 1 of the Natomas Levee Improvement Project is to improve the levee such that it provides base flood protection. The cost for Phase 1 of the project is $260 million, with $11.5 million coming from a federal agency. The submittal estimates the authorized, appropriated and expended costs through December 2007. These estimates indicate that $260 million will have been authorized (100%), $123 million (47%) will have been appropriated, and $41.7 million (16%) will have been expended. The amount of funding that has been appropriated and expended does not meet FEMA's regulations for Zone A99.

Mr. Ray Karridge
September 27, 2007
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In addition, critical features in a restoration project must include the deficiencies for which the levee was de-certified. Within the submittal for the Natomas basin, documentation was provided to indicate that the USACE de-certified the levees specifically due to inadequacies in freeboard and underseepage protection. Therefore, the height requirements for the levee to meet freeboard and the measures taken to protect against underseepage must be considered critical features. These critical features must be under construction and 50% completed as measured by the actual expenditure of the estimated construction budget. There is not sufficient documentation in the submittal to show what percent of these critical features is complete. However, it appears from Table 1 of the submittal that much of the expended funds are devoted to design activities and erosion control work, therefore it is unlikely that the requirements for critical features are met.

While this submittal does not meet the requirements of 44 CFR 61.12, there are other opportunities for identifying the flood risk during the restoration project. As you are aware, 44 CFR 65.14 addresses the remapping of areas for which local flood protection systems no longer provide base flood protection through the designation of a restoration flood zone, Zone AR. FEMA has reviewed your submission to determine if it meets the basic criteria for the designation of a Zone AR. The general requirements appear to be met for your situation, however additional documentation is required to meet all of the conditions set forth in 44 CFR 65.14.

Enclosed is a checklist which identifies the specific requirements and whether or not your submittal currently meets these requirements. Please use this checklist to prepare a submittal for the request for the remapping of the area as a restoration zone. When the submittal is complete, please submit it to Sally Ziolkowski, Director, Mitigation Division, FEMA Region IX.

I hope this information is useful to you in addressing the flood risk that exists associated with the decertified levee system. If you need additional information or assistance, please contact Kathy Schaefer in FEMA Region IX by telephone at (510) 627-7129.

Sincerely,

for David I. Maurstad
Assistant Administrator
Mitigation

DM:mjm

cc: Sally Ziolkowski, Director, Mitigation Division, FEMA Region IX
Kathy Schaeffer, Engineer, Mitigation Division, FEMA Region IX
Terry Schutten, County Executive, Sacramento County
Curt Coad, Assistant County Administrator (Interim), Sutter County

Attachment 5

U.S. Department of Homeland Security
1111 Broadway, Suite 1200
Oakland, CA 94607-1052

FEMA

October 10, 2007

Mr. Ray Kerridge
City Manager
City of Sacramento
1395 35th Avenue
Sacramento, California 95822-2911

Dear Mr. Kerridge:

This letter is in reference to the ongoing update to the Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) for the City of Sacramento, Sacramento County, and Sutter County. On December 29, 2006, the Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) sent letters providing notice that the entire Natomas Basin will be mapped within a Special Flood Hazard Area. These letters also outlined the FEMA mapping process where preliminary FIRMs will be issued, followed by a comment period, a subsequent compliance period, and publication of effective FIRMs.

FEMA's distribution of preliminary FIRMs was delayed to allow for additional coordination with your community on mapping issues, however, it is imperative that the preliminary FIRMs be distributed before this year's flood season. It is our intent to distribute the preliminary FIRMs on November 15, 2007. As we have discussed with your City's utilities department, if these preliminary FIRMs are to propose a Zone AR designation for the Natomas Basin, FEMA needs to have all the requirements outlined in Title 44, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 65.14 (44 CFR 65.14), in our office by October 25, 2007. Please note that if the 44 CFR 65.14 requirements are subsequently provided during the comment period for the preliminary FIRMs, a Zone AR would be proposed on revised preliminary FIRMs.

If you have questions or need additional information regarding flood mapping or the Zone AR requirements, please contact Ms. Kathleen Schaefer, Map Modernization Regional Engineer, by telephone at (510) 627-7129.

Sincerely,

Sally Ziolkowski, Director
Mitigation Division

cc: Terry Schutten, Sacramento County Executive
Larry Combs, Sutter County Administrator
David Brent, Engineering Services Manager, City of Sacramento
Ricardo Pineda, CA DWR, NFIP State Coordinator
Judy Sonticra, USACE, Sacramento District

www.fema.gov

RESOLUTION NO.

Adopted by the Sacramento City Council

AR FLOOD ZONE APPLICATON TO FEMA FOR THE NATOMAS BASIN

BACKGROUND

A. SAFCA and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers have determined that the existing levees surrounding the Natomas Basin no longer provide 100-year flood protection.

B. FEMA in letters to the City, Sacramento County and Sutter County, dated December 29, 2006, stated their intent of remapping the Natomas Basin into a Special Flood Hazard Zone.

C. Sacramento City Council adopted Resolution No. 2007-432 on June 21, 2007 supporting the joint application with Sacramento and Sutter Counties to FEMA for an A99 flood zone designation for the Natomas Basin and authorized the City Manager to submit the joint application.

D. City and Counties submitted joint A99 application to FEMA on June 29, 2007.

E. City and Counties received letter from FEMA dated September 27, 2007 denying the A99 application. The letter states that the Natomas Basin meets the basic criteria of an AR flood zone designation provided that additional data is submitted to support the AR designation.

F. City and Counties received letters from FEMA dated October 10, 2007 stating that the deadline for the AR application is October 25, 2007.

G. Is it anticipated that the Board of Supervisors for Sacramento and Sutter Counties will support the AR Zone application to FEMA.

BASED ON THE FACTS SET FORTH IN THE BACKGROUND, THE CITY COUNCIL RESOLVES AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. Council supports the joint application with Sacramento and Sutter Counties to FEMA for an AR flood zone designation for the Natomas Basin. Council authorizes the City Manager to submit a joint AR application to FEMA and Council requests the AR designation from FEMA.