



ATLAS 14 PROPOSED CODE AMENDMENTS

National Weather Service study updates our understanding of flood risk.



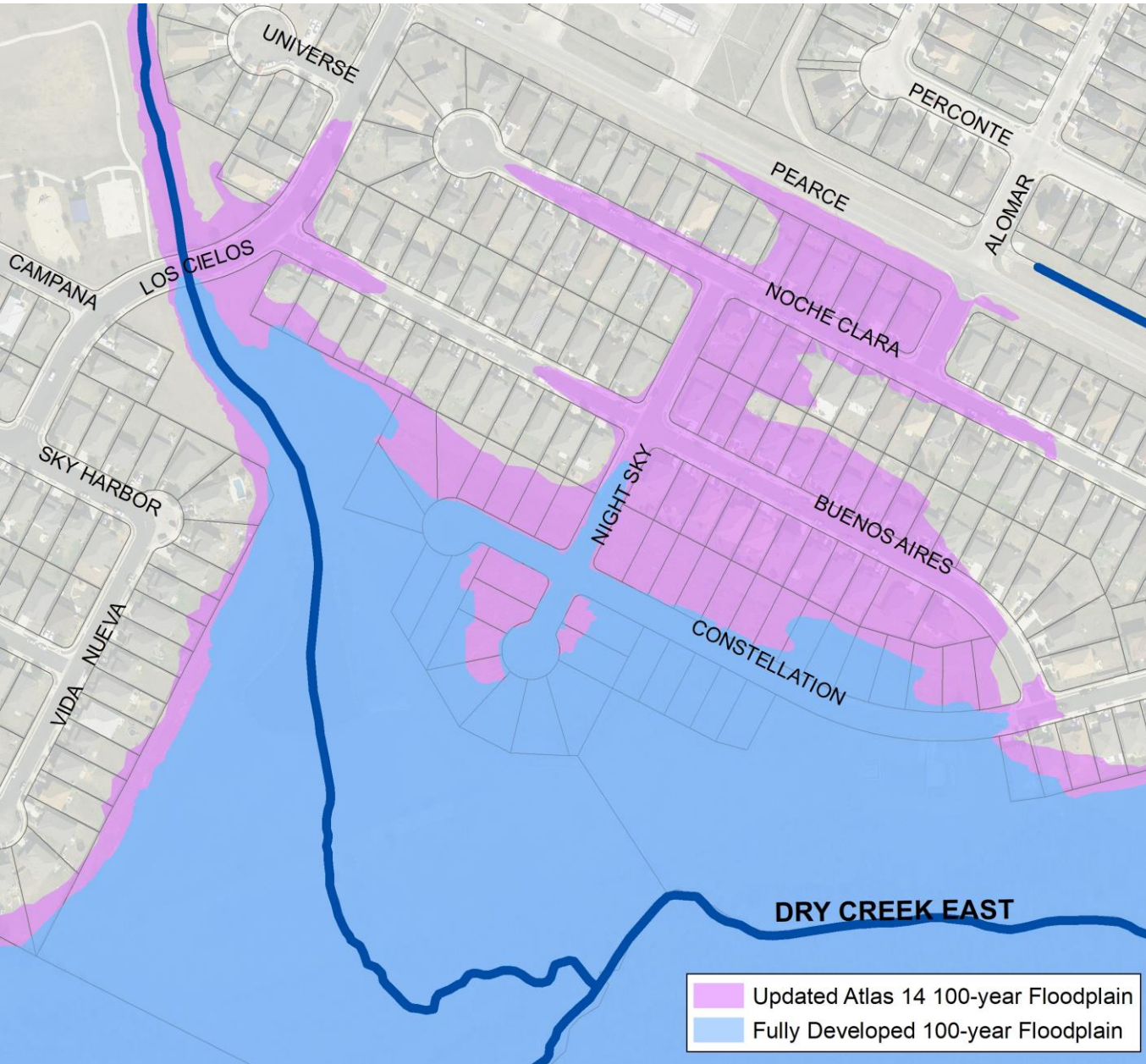
Overview

- Study background
- Summary of key impacts
- Recommended response
- Stakeholder process and feedback
- Next steps

Atlas 14 Rainfall Changes

- Nationwide examination of historic rainfall data
- Adds data from 1961 – 2017
- Colorado River watershed not significantly impacted

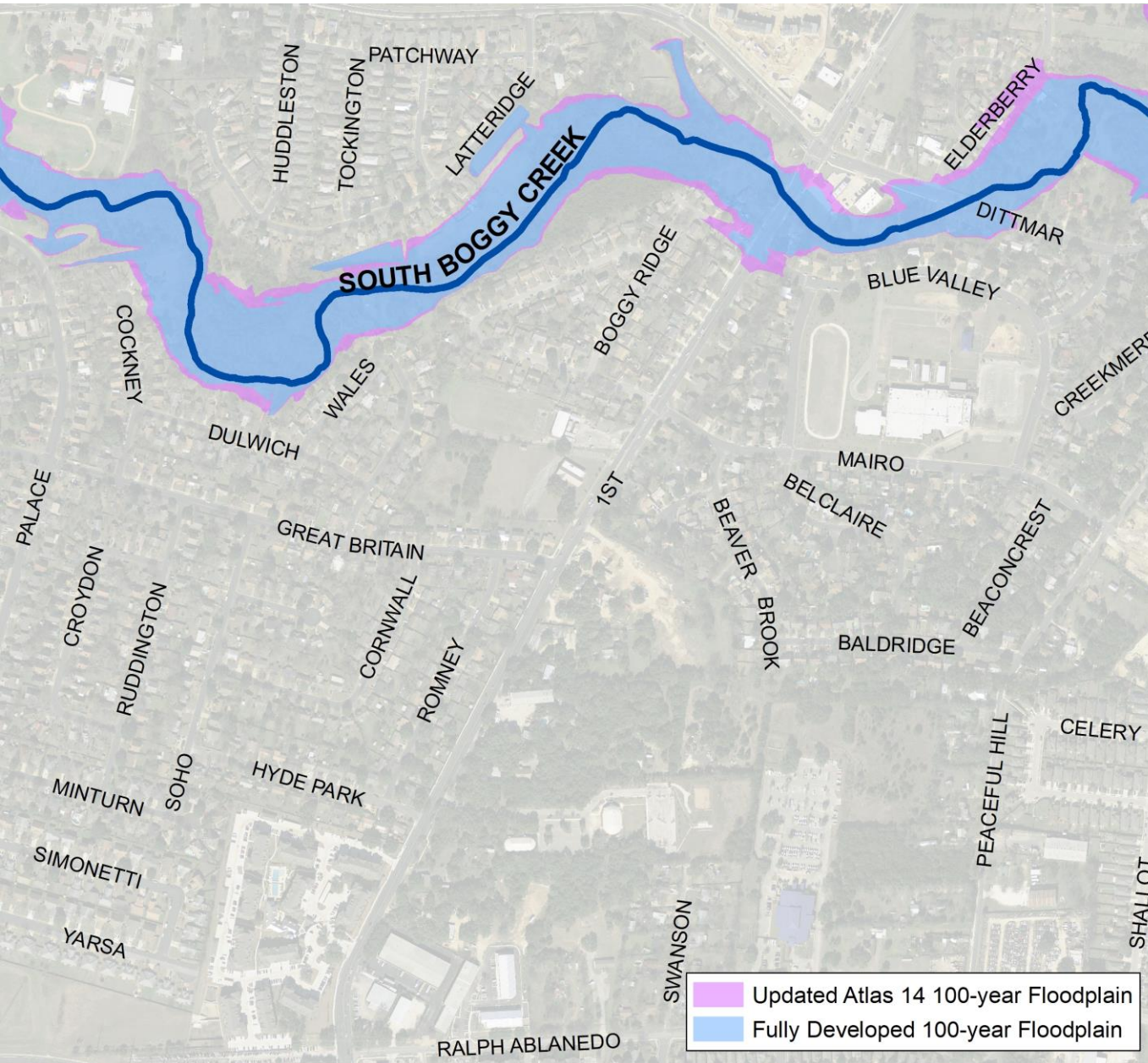




Austin's

Floodplains Will Expand

- More homes and businesses are at risk of flooding than previously thought.
- Affects ability to develop, remodel, or redevelop property.
- Affects the need for and the cost of flood insurance.
- Floodplains will need to be re-studied.
- See impacts at ATXfloodpro.com



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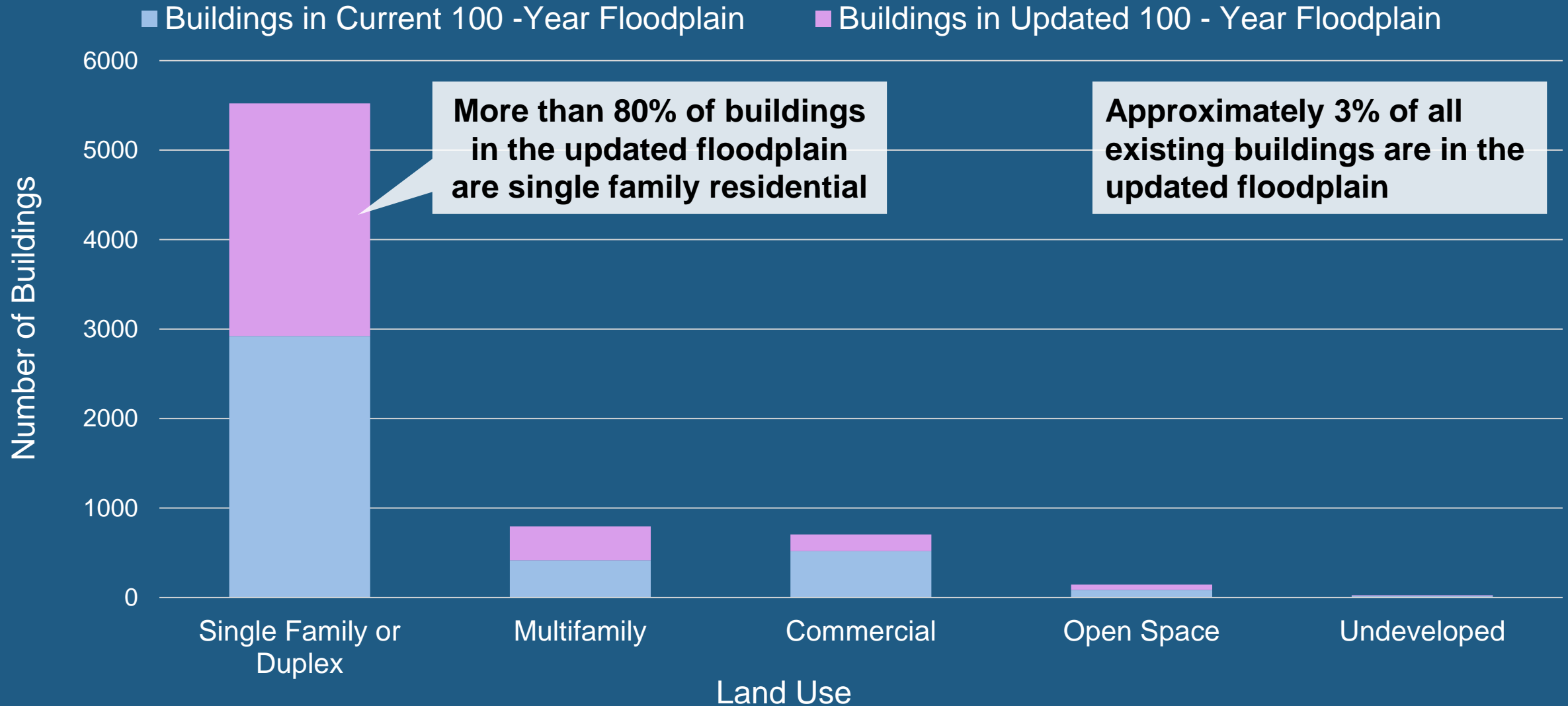
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Key impacts of Atlas 14 updated rainfall data

Measure	Current	Updated	Percent Increase
100-year rainfall (24-hour)	10.2 inches	Up to 13+ inches	30%
Buildings in 100-year floodplain	4,000	7,200*	80%
Buildings in the 25-year floodplain	2,000	4,000	100%

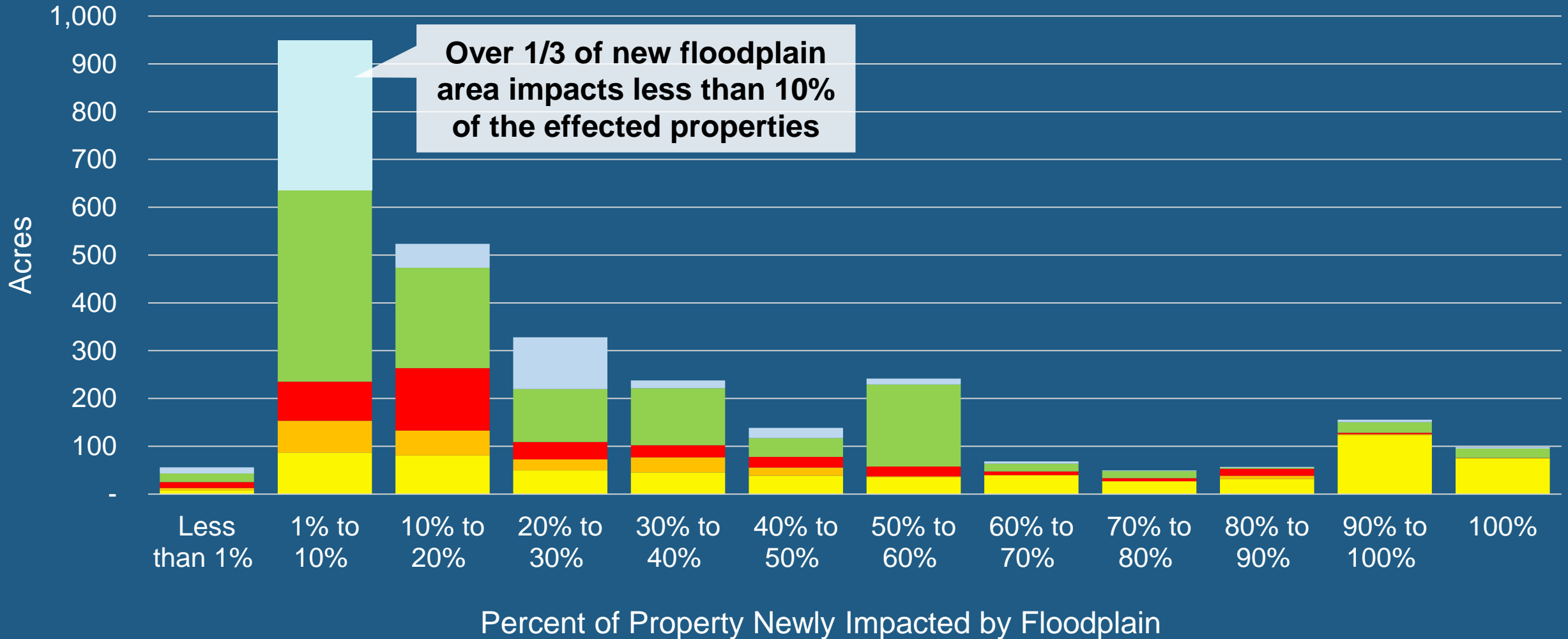
**Excludes Colorado River floodplain and associated lakes*

Buildings in the Floodplain



Acres Impacted by Updated Atlas 14 Floodplain by Percent of Property Impacted and Land Use

■ Single Family
 ■ Multifamily
 ■ Commercial
 ■ Open Space
 ■ Undeveloped

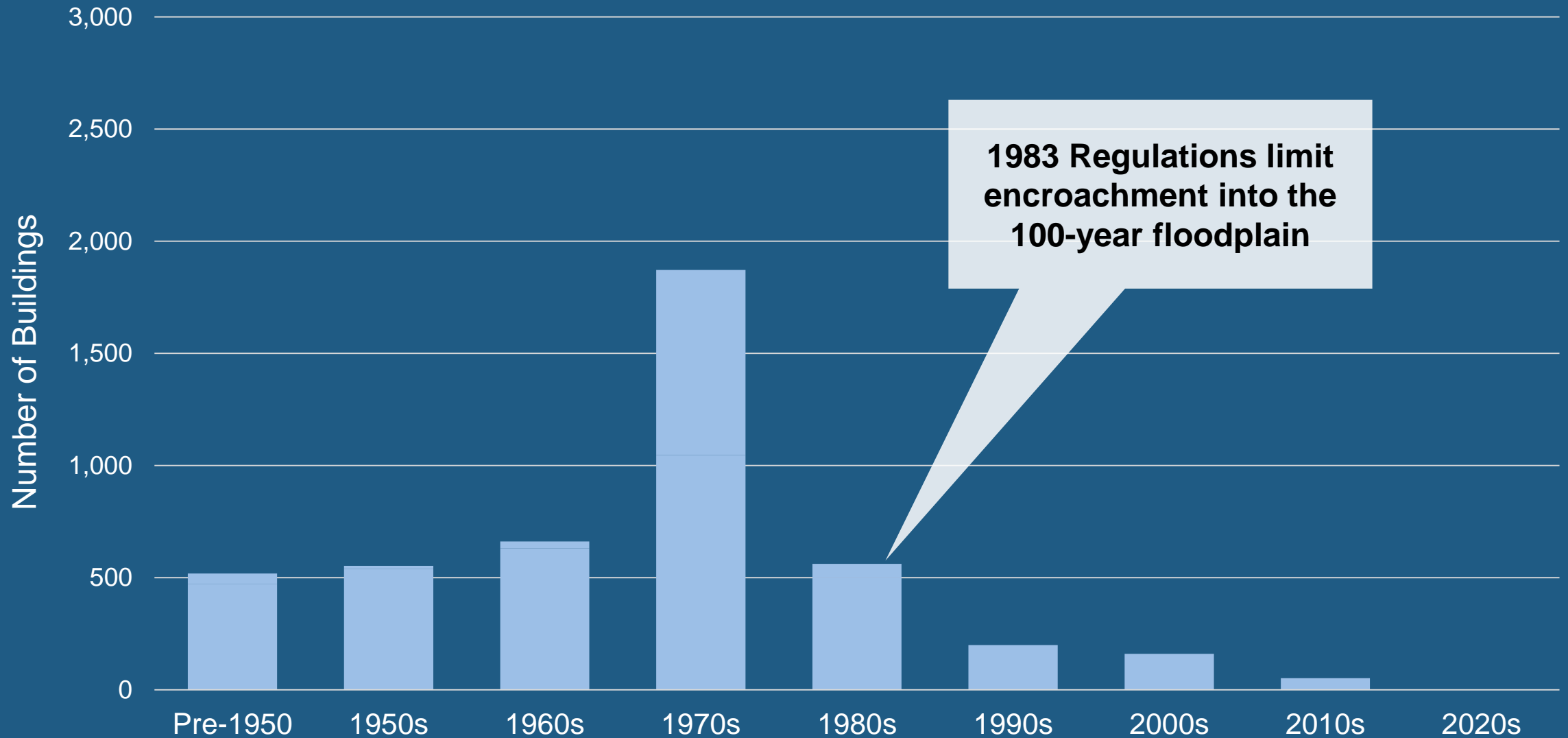


City of Austin

Floodplain Regulation History

- 1975 – Entered FEMA emergency program; first floodplain maps and regulations
- 1983 – Entered full National Flood Insurance Program; updated maps and floodplain regulations
- 2003 – Amended regulations to include administrative variance process





Number of buildings constructed in the current 100-year floodplain by decade

Recommended Response

Step 1

Land Development Code
amendments

Step 2

Drainage Criteria Manual
revisions

Step 3

Floodplain Study and
Mapping Updates





Step 1

Land Development Code amendments

- Revise floodplain definitions
- Create a redevelopment exception
- Expand the Colorado River exception
- Increase the freeboard requirement

Revise floodplain definitions

New 100-yr floodplain ==>> Current 500-yr floodplain

New 25-yr floodplain ==>> Current 100-yr floodplain

- No change to Colorado River floodplain
- Interim definitions until floodplains are re-mapped in 2 - 3 years

Storm Level	Current Rainfall Depth (24 hour storm)	Updated Rainfall Depth (24 hour storm)
25-year (4% chance)	7.6 inches	Almost 10 inches
100-year (1% chance)	10.2 inches	Up to 13+ inches
500-year (0.2% chance)	13.5 inches	Up to 19.5 inches

Revise floodplain definitions

New 100-yr
floodplain ==>> Current 500-yr
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New 25-yr
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Purpose

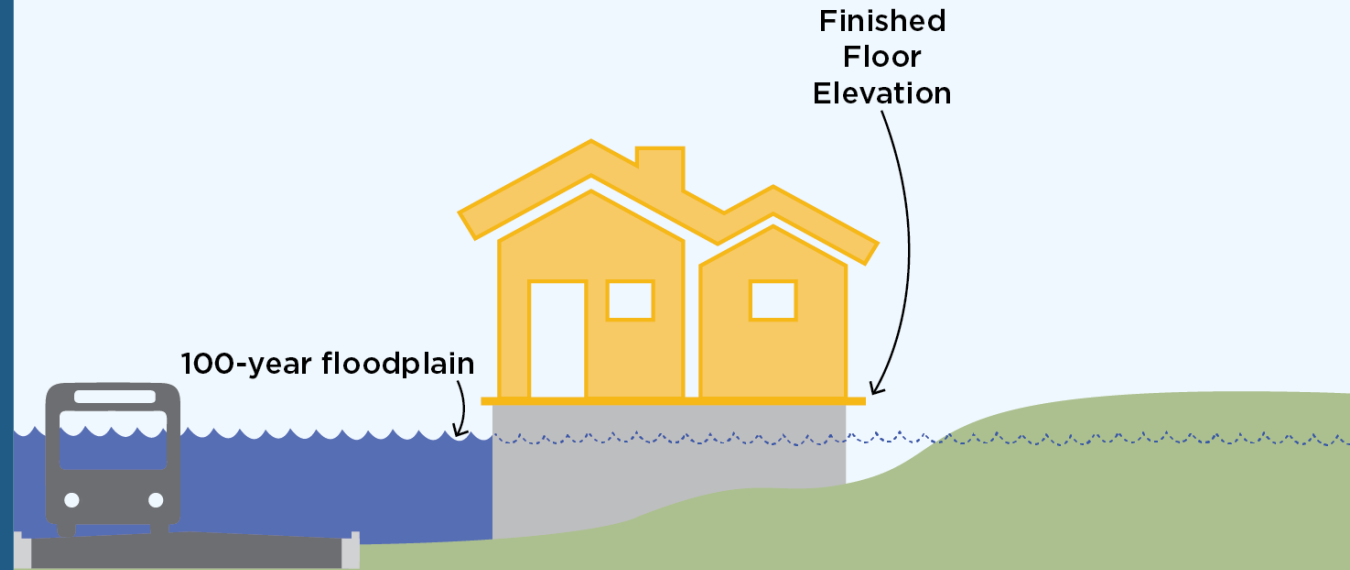
- Limit construction of new buildings in areas with known flood risk during re-mapping process

Create a redevelopment exception

Administrative approval process for a residential building in the floodplain if:

1. Replaces an existing residential building
2. Finished floor elevation is at least 2 feet above the 100-year floodplain
3. Does not increase number of dwelling units

If these 3 conditions are met, the safe access requirement is waived



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Purpose

- Incentivizes development that decreases flood risk
- 80% of buildings in the updated 100-year floodplain are residential
- Limits the number of dwelling units at risk

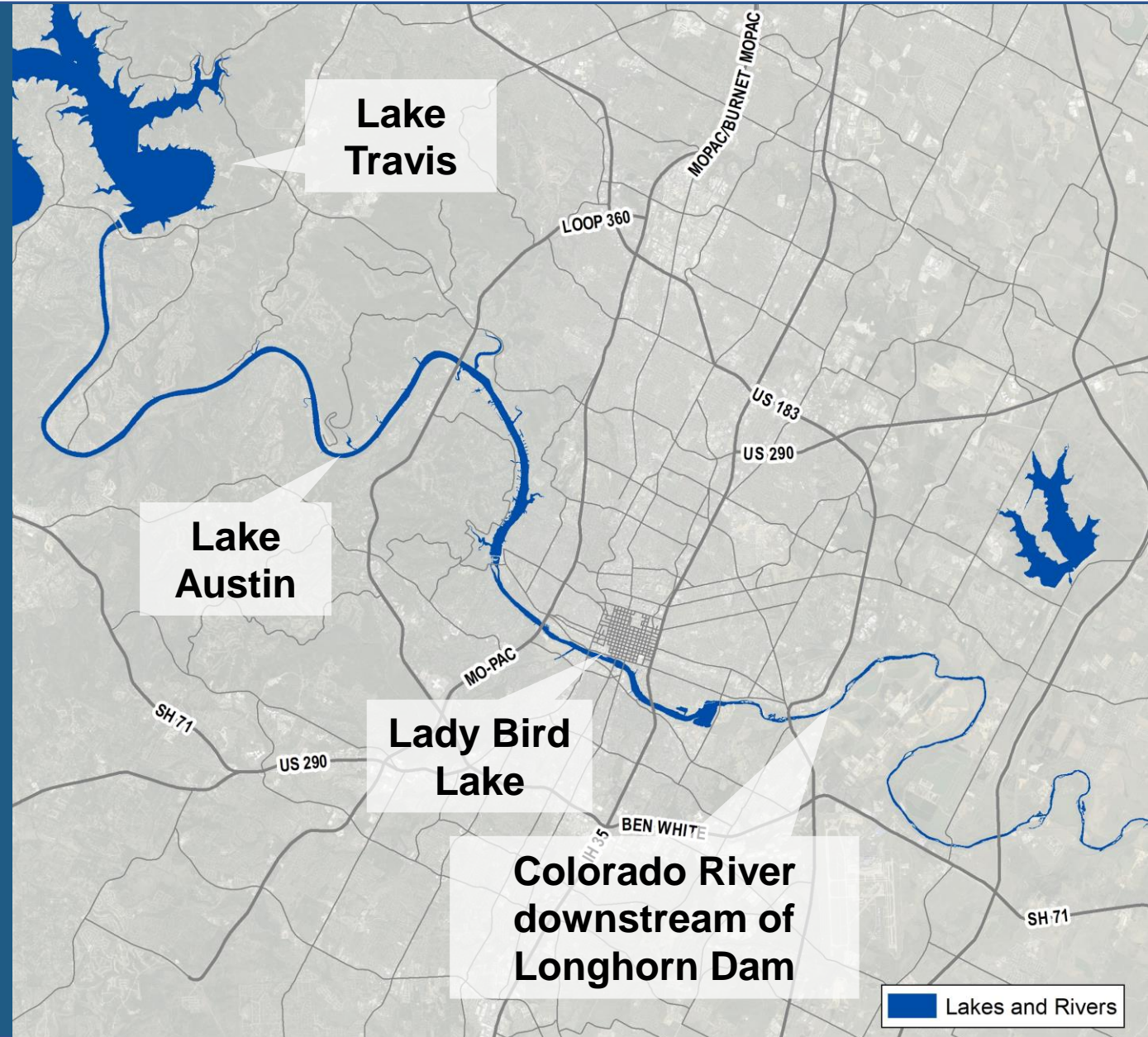
Expand the Colorado River exception

The existing exception allows for a building to encroach on the 100-year floodplain without safe access if it is:

- Downstream of Longhorn Dam
- Along Lady Bird Lake

WPD recommends expanding this exception to include:

- Lake Austin
- Lake Travis



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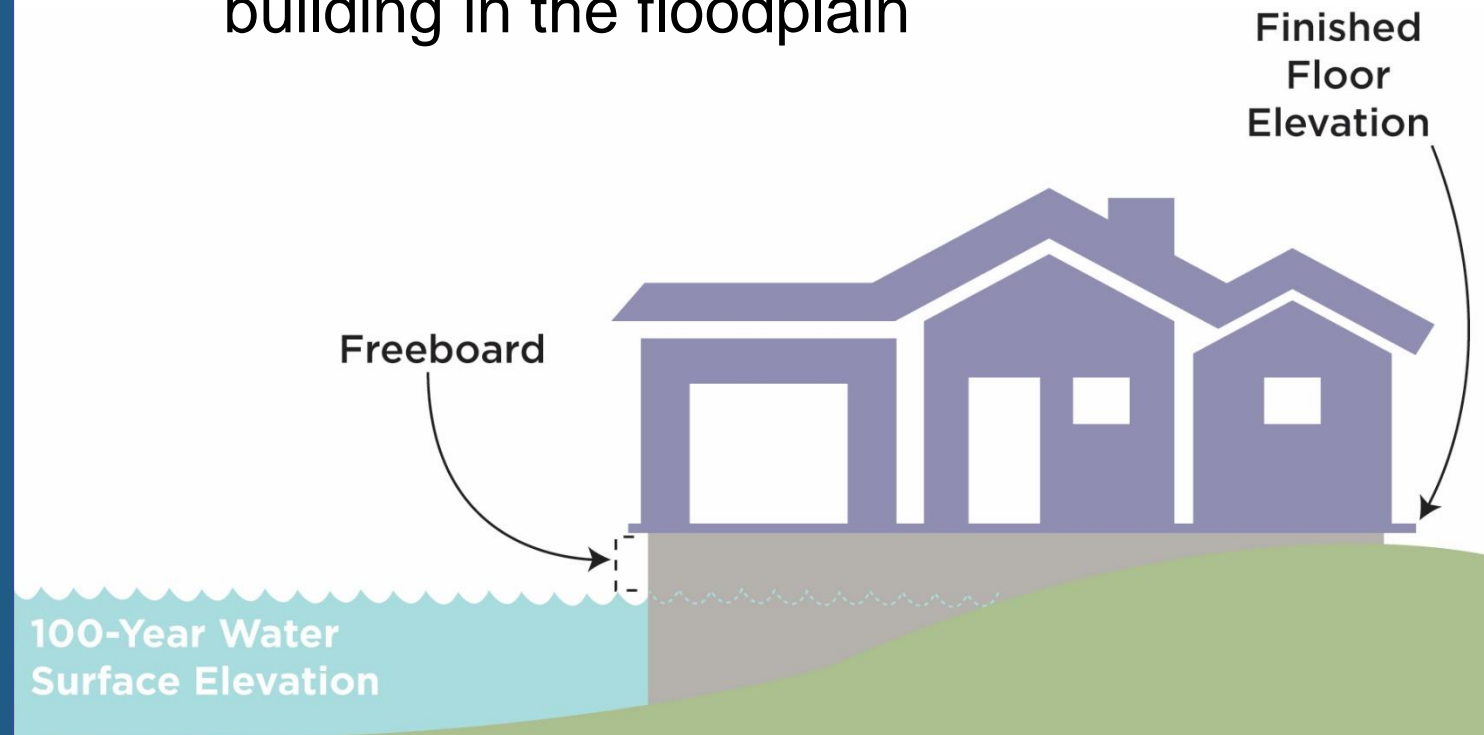
- Provide uniform regulations along Colorado River
- Colorado River flooding is not flash flooding like rest of City

Increase the freeboard requirement

Increase the minimum height between a building's lowest floor and the 100-year floodplain from 1 ft to 2 ft

Purpose

- Simplify regulations with uniformity
- Freeboard is the single-most effective means for reducing flood risk to a building in the floodplain



Step 2 Drainage Criteria Manual revisions

- Atlas 14 updates rainfall rates that are used to determine:
 - Floodplain location
 - Size of storm drain pipes, inlets, and ditches
 - Detention pond size

Step 3 Floodplain Study and Mapping Updates

- Utilize consultants from rotation list to complete studies
- Process to take 2 - 3 years
- Once complete, will provide data to FEMA to update flood insurance maps

Stakeholder Outreach

Public Meetings	Professional Organizations	Other Organizations	Neighborhood Groups
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 5 public meetings focusing on areas with largest floodplain impacts• 2 public meetings focusing on floodwalls• 24,000 postcards sent to residents and property owners	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• American Society of Civil Engineers• Austin Contractors and Engineer's Association• American Institute of Architects• Austin Board of Realtors• National Association of Professional Mortgage Women• Texas Water Research Network• Society for Marketing Professional Services• Real Estate Council of Austin• Home Builders Association• Austin Infill Coalition	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Downtown Austin Alliance• Waller Creek Conservancy• Shoal Creek Conservancy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Austin Neighborhoods Council• Onion Creek Homeowners Association

Stakeholder Outreach

City and County		Council & Commissions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Development Services• Parks and Recreation• Neighborhood Housing and Development• Capital Planning Office• Law Department• Public Works• Austin Transportation Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Austin Water• Sustainability• Office of Real Estate• Department of Aviation• Travis County	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Codes and Ordinances Joint Committee• Environmental Commission• Zoning and Platting Commission• Council Offices

Proposal Changes due to Stakeholder Input

- Extended outreach period to reach more stakeholders
- Removed limit on maximum floor area for the redevelopment exception
- Will revise criteria to remove the requirement for an Environmental Resource Inventory outside of a creek buffer

Stakeholder Concerns

- Permitting uncertainty for development projects
- Impact of increased freeboard to visitability compliance
- Impact of increased freeboard to McMansion height restrictions
- Creek buffer impacts of floodplain expansion
- Parkland Dedication impacts of floodplain expansion
- Lack of commercial redevelopment exception
- No floodplain disclosure for tenants

Anticipated Timeline

Dec 2018

Jan 2019

Feb 2019

May 2019

(Timeline to be decided pending input)

Step 1 Code

**Boards and
Commissions****City
Council****New floodplain definitions effective**

(Staff recommends changes become effective immediately upon Council adoption)

Step 2 Criteria

**Provide
guidance to
development
community****Staff working on
proposed rules****Stakeholder
Meetings****Criteria
effective**
(TBD after
stakeholder input)**Administrative
approval process**
(depends on effective date)

Step 3 Mapping

**Initiate studies
with existing
rotation list****Initiate process to create new
rotation list (will need City Council
approval)****Public
meetings
when studies
near
completion**
(Estimated 2021)

FOLLOW OUR PROGRESS

[AustinTexas.gov/atlas14](https://austintexas.gov/atlas14)

CONTACT US

Atlas14@AustinTexas.gov

Floodplain Hotline 512-974-2843

VIEW FLOODPLAINS

ATXfloodpro.com