

What is TMC Chapter 17.30?

TMC Chapter 17.30 contains Topeka's floodplain management code sections. It regulates land development within the special flood hazard areas of the City. Its purpose is to mitigate the effects of flooding and promote public health and safety during large storm events. It also maintains the City of Topeka's eligibility for participation in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), which makes flood insurance available to local property owners.

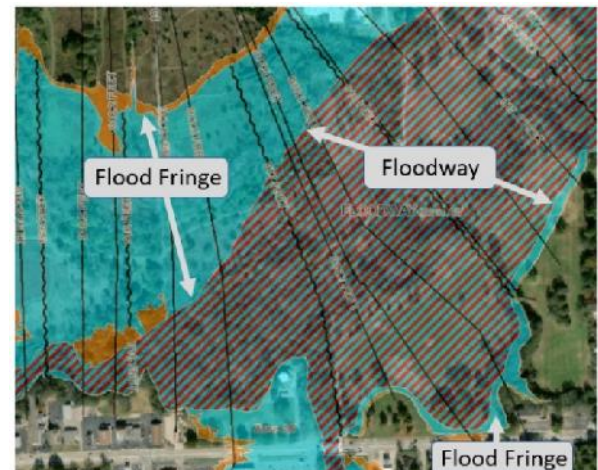
Why is Topeka revising TMC Chapter 17.30?

The current requirements of TMC Chapter 17.30 do not address flood zones behind the City of Topeka levee systems. These levee ponding areas, also known as interior drainage area floodplains, were determined as part of the Topeka Levee Certification project through detailed modeling of the levee system. The levee ponding areas are critical flood storage features. Preserving the available storage volume in these areas is key to reducing or eliminating flood impacts on neighboring areas. In addition, TMC Chapter 17.30 provides little guidance on development in flood fringe areas to ensure existing properties are protected.



What revisions to TMC Chapter 17.30 are proposed?

Revisions to the code chapter are proposed for construction in all levee ponding areas. These areas will be designated as FEMA AH zones once the draft maps become effective and are currently designated by the City as best available data for the subject areas. Any fill in an AH zone/ponding area must be offset by compensating cuts to maintain the overall flood storage volume. In addition, proposed land development projects that add 5,000 square feet or more of buildings, pavement, and other hard surfaces and is located in any mapped flood zone must demonstrate that the development will not cause an increased flood risk to an existing habitable structure located in or adjacent to the FEMA floodplain.



Was the design community involved in the update?

Yes. Topeka Utilities has implemented compensating cut/fill requirements for development projects within levee ponding areas since the Levee Certification material is the best information available. As a result, the design community has already been following this practice. In addition, Utilities held a meeting with land development design stakeholders on August 18, 2020 and described the proposed revisions to this code chapter.