

What does the Floodway and Floodplain mean for Land Uses?

A majority of the commercial properties in the La Plaza Vieja Neighborhood are in the regulated floodway¹ or the 100 year floodplain². Buildings located in these flood zones have restrictions on their development, redevelopment and improvement. These regulations are intended to prevent one property owner's actions from increasing the flood hazard to other properties and prevent damage and loss.



Clay Avenue Wash

Development Regulations in the Floodway and Floodplain

All new development in the floodway is prohibited by the City of Flagstaff Floodplain Ordinance unless the property can be mitigated in such a way to be removed from the Floodway. If a structure that was built before the designation of the floodway is replaced, the new structure cannot increase in mass, and the lowest floor of the building must be raised above the flood level.

The floodway and floodplain also limits the amount of improvements completed on a structure. If the cost of an improvement or repair of damage equals or exceeds fifty (50) percent of the “market value”

of the structure before the “start of construction” of the improvements then it is considered a “substantial Improvement” This calculation is tallied across 10 years and if repairs exceed this level then the property owner must bring the property up to the current floodplain management standards including floodproofing or elevating the building, which can be cost prohibitive. This has *been problematic in Southside and La Plaza Vieja, and in some cases, buildings and structures have deteriorated or been abandoned as a result of this restriction.*

Rio de Flag Flood Control Project

The City has been working with the Army Corps of Engineers for many years to tackle the issues of the Rio de Flag floodplain. In order for the floodplain in La Plaza Vieja to be reduced in size, the entire floodway must be improved downstream first. Funding continues to be an impediment to moving forward because the project has a price tag between approximately \$60 and \$110 million.

¹ The channel of a river or stream and the parts of the floodplain adjoining the channel, which are reasonably required to efficiently carry and discharge the flood water or flood flow of a river or stream.

² The area adjoining a river or stream that has been or may be covered by the 100-year flood

