

Washington State Department of Commerce

**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT- DISASTER RECOVERY PROGRAM
NEW HOUSING SUMAS TRI-PLEX**

**Final Notice and Public Explanation of a Proposed Activity in a Federal Flood Risk Management
Standard Designated Floodplain**

To: All interested Agencies, Groups, and Individuals

This is to give notice that the Washington State Department of Commerce (COMMERCE) has conducted an evaluation as required by Executive Order(s) 11988, as amended by Executive Order 13690, in accordance with HUD regulations at 24 CFR 55.20 in Subpart C Procedures for Making Determinations on Floodplain Management and Wetlands Protection. The activity is funded under HUD's Community Development Block Grant- Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) #P-21-WA-53-LDZ1, New Housing program.

The proposed project is located at 221 Front Street in Sumas, Whatcom County, in the 1-percent-annual-chance (100-year) floodplain (Zone AE). The extent of the FFRMS floodplain was determined using a freeboard value approach. The existing 2,095 square feet damaged home is on a 0.15-acre parcel. Construction of the single-family tri-plex will be resilient to future flooding by elevating the structure and using flood-resistant materials. Proposed activities include demolition of the vacant, damaged single-family home and rebuilding a three-unit townhome that is resilient to future flooding by elevating the structure, using flood-resistant materials, implementing proper drainage systems, and placing utilities at higher levels. One-, two-, three-, and four-bedroom units. Of the three units, one will be ADA accessible.

COMMERCE has considered the following alternatives and mitigation measures to minimize adverse impacts and to preserve the existing floodplain/wetland. The proximity of the existing building location to amenities and services provides the future homeowner with nearby access to the WCTA bus stop, the public library, pharmacy, grocery store, playing fields, and playground. Demolition of the damaged home and construction of the tri-plex offers the community a significantly better value and faster delivery than starting from an undeveloped lot. The goal in constructing the triplex is to enhance the existing housing stock.

The building will be elevated 2.8 feet above the base flood elevation as described in 24 CFR 55.7. The development of the proposed project site meets the goals identified in the project description and reviewed or considered through the natural, social, and economic values described in 24 CFR 55.20(c)(2).

No state or federally listed threatened or endangered species will be impacted by the project. The project design will not impact the nearby natural wetland areas. The project site is approximately 720 feet from Bone Creek, classified as a PEM1C by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's National Wetlands Inventory. A PEM1C is a system Palustrine, class Emergent, Subclass Persistent, and water regime Seasonally Flooded. The project will incorporate best management practices to minimize potential adverse stormwater runoff impacts during construction.

COMMERCE has reevaluated alternatives to building in the floodplain and has determined that there is no practicable alternative to elevation and construction of the Sumas Tri-Plex in the floodplain. Environmental files documenting compliance with Executive Order 11988, as amended by Executive Order 13690, are

available for public inspection, review, and copy upon request at the times and location delineated in the last paragraph of this notice for receipt of comments.

There are three primary purposes for this notice. First, people who may be affected by activities in a floodplain and those who have an interest in the protection of the natural environment should be given an opportunity to express their concerns and provide information about these areas. Second, an adequate public notice program can be an important public educational tool. The dissemination of information and request for public comments about floodplains can facilitate and enhance Federal efforts to reduce the risks and impacts associated with the occupancy and modification of these special areas. Third, as a matter of fairness, when the Federal government determines it will participate in actions taking place in a floodplain, it must inform those who may be put at greater or continued risk.

Written comments must be received by the COMMERCE at the following address on or before June 26, 2025, via email at CDBGDisasterRecovery@commerce.wa.gov or the following mailing address: Washington State Department of Commerce, Attention: Lanée Egolf, CDBG-DR Environmental Review Officer, 1011 Plum Street SE, PO Box 42525, Olympia, WA 98504. A full description of the project may also be reviewed at www.hfhwhatcom.org.

Posted Date: June 18, 2025