

ORDINANCE NO. 1319

AN ORDINANCE REVISING CHAPTER 15 OF THE RALSTON MUNICIPAL CODE TITLED FLOODWAYS AND FLOOD FRINGE DISTRICT; TO REPEAL PROVISIONS IN CONFLICT THEREWITH; TO PROVIDE AN EFFECTIVE DATE; AND TO AUTHORIZE THAT SAID ORDINANCE BE PUBLISHED IN PAMPHLET FORM.

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF RALSTON, NEBRASKA.

That on the 14th day of November, 2022, the City of Ralston Planning Commission conducted a regularly scheduled public hearing at which it considered the revised Floodway and Flood Fringe District.

And that on the 21st day of March, 2023 the Ralston City Council conducted a regularly scheduled public hearing at which it considered revising Chapter 15 of the Ralston Municipal Code titled Floodways and Flood Fringe District. Upon consideration of such, the Ralston City Council approved the revision of Chapter 15 so that the passage of this ordinance shall read as follows:

Chapter 15

FLOODWAYS AND FLOOD FRINGE DISTRICTS

§ 15-101. STATUTORY AUTHORIZATION, FINDINGS OF FACT, AND PURPOSES.

§ 15-101.1 Statutory Authorization.

The Legislature of the State of Nebraska has delegated the responsibility to local governmental units to adopt zoning regulations designed to protect public health, safety, general welfare, and property of the people of the state. The Legislature, in *Nebraska Revised Statutes* Sections 31-1001 to 31-1023 (as amended), has further assigned the responsibility to adopt, administer, and enforce floodplain management regulations to the county, city, or village with zoning jurisdiction over the flood-prone area. Therefore, the Mayor and City Council of the City of Ralston, Nebraska, ordains as follows.

§ 15-101.2. Findings Of Fact.

1. Flood Losses Resulting from Periodic Inundation.

The flood hazard areas of Ralston, Nebraska, are subject to inundation which results in loss of life and property, health and safety hazards, disruption of commerce and governmental services extraordinary public expenditures for flood protection and relief, and impairment of the tax base all of which adversely affect the public health, safety, and general welfare.

2. General Causes of the Flood Losses.

These flood losses are caused by the cumulative effect of obstructions in floodplains causing increases in flood heights and velocities as well as the occupancy of flood hazard areas by uses vulnerable to flood or hazardous to others that are inadequately elevated or otherwise unprotected from flood damages.

§ 15-101.3. Statement Of Purpose.

It is the purpose of this Chapter to promote public health, safety, and general welfare and to minimize those losses described in Section 15-101.2,1 by applying the provisions of this Chapter to:

1. Restrict or prohibit uses that are dangerous to health, safety, or property in times of flooding or cause undue increases in flood heights or velocities.
2. Require that uses vulnerable to floods, including public facilities which serve such uses, be provided with flood protection at the time of initial construction.
3. Reduce financial burdens from flood damage borne by the community, its governmental units, its residents, and its businesses by preventing excessive and unsafe development in areas subject to flooding.
4. Assure that eligibility is maintained for property owners in the community to purchase flood insurance in the National Flood Insurance Program.

§15-101.4. Adherence to Regulations

The regulations of this ordinance are in compliance with the National Flood Insurance Program Regulations as published in Title 44 of the Code of Federal Regulations and the Nebraska Minimum Standards for Floodplain Management Programs as published in the Nebraska Administrative Code Title 455, Chapter 1.

§ 15-201. GENERAL PROVISIONS.

§ 15-201.1. Lands To Which Chapter Applies.

The Chapter shall apply to all lands within the jurisdiction of the City of Ralston, Nebraska identified on the Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) panels 31055C033H and 31055C0334H dated December 2, 2005, or shown on the Index as Zones A, A1-30, AE, AO, or AH and within the Zoning Districts FW and FF established in Section 15-301 of this Chapter. In all areas covered by this Chapter, no development shall be permitted except upon the issuance of a floodplain development permit to develop, granted by the floodplain administrator or the City Council of the City of Ralston or its duly designated representative under such safeguards and restrictions as the City of Ralston or the designated representative may reasonably impose for the promotion and maintenance of the general welfare, health of the inhabitants of the community and where specifically noted in Sections 15-401 and 15-501.

§ 15-201.2 Enforcement Officer.

The Chief Building Official of the community is hereby designated as the community's duly designated Enforcement Officer under this Chapter.

§ 15-201.3 Rules for Interpretation of District Boundaries.

The boundaries of the floodways and flood fringe overlay districts shall be determined by scaling distances on the official zoning map or the Flood Insurance Rate Map. Where interpretation is needed of the exact location of the boundaries of the districts as shown on the official zoning map, the floodplain administrator shall make the necessary interpretation. In such cases where the interpretation is contested, the Board of Adjustment will resolve the dispute. The regulatory flood elevation for the point in question shall be the governing factor in locating the district boundary on the land. The person contesting the location of the district boundary shall be given a reasonable opportunity to present their case to the Board of Adjustment and to submit their own technical evidence if so desired.

§ 15-201.4. Compliance.

Within identified floodplains of this community, no development shall be located, extended, converted, or structurally altered without full compliance with the terms of this Chapter and other applicable regulations.

§ 15-201.5. Abrogation And Greater Restrictions.

This ordinance does not intend to repeal, abrogate or impair any existent easements, covenants, or deed restrictions. However, where this Chapter imposes greater restrictions, the provision of this Chapter shall prevail. All other ordinances inconsistent with this Chapter are hereby repealed to the extent of the inconsistency only.

§ 15-201.6. Interpretation.

In their interpretation and application, the provisions of this Chapter shall be held to be minimum requirements and shall be liberally construed in favor of the governing body and shall not be deemed a limitation or repeal of any other powers granted by state statutes.

15-201.7. Warning And Disclaimer of Liability.

The degree of flood protection required by this Chapter is considered reasonable for regulatory purposes and is based on engineering and scientific methods of study. Larger floods may occur or the flood height may be increased by manmade or natural causes, such as ice jams and bridge openings restricted by debris. This Chapter does not imply that areas outside floodway and flood fringe district boundaries or land uses permitted within such districts will be free from flooding or flood damage. This Chapter shall not create liability on the part of the City of Ralston, Nebraska, or any officer or employee thereof for any flood damages that may result from reliance on this Chapter or any administrative decision lawfully made thereunder.

15-201.8. Severability.

If any section, clause, provision, or portion of this Chapter is adjudged unconstitutional or invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, the remainder of this Chapter shall not be affected thereby.

§15-201.9. Appeal.

Where a request for a permit to develop or a variance is denied by the Building Inspector the applicant may apply for such permit or variance directly to the Board of Adjustment.

§ 15-301. ESTABLISHMENT OF ZONING DISTRICTS

Along watercourses where a floodway has been established, the mapped floodplain areas are hereby divided into the following districts: a floodway overlay district (FW) and a flood fringe overlay district (FF) as identified in the Flood Insurance Study dated May 5, 2014, and on

accompanying FIRM panels as established in Section 15-201.1, or best available data. The flood fringe overlay district shall correspond to flood zones A, AE, A1-30, AH, AO AR, A99, and floodway areas in Zone AE that are identified on FIRM panels. The floodway overlay district shall correspond to the floodway areas in Zone AE that are identified on the FIRM panels. Within these districts, all uses not meeting the standards of this ordinance and those standards of the underlying zoning district shall be prohibited.

§15-401. FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT ADMINISTRATION.

§ 15-401.1. Designation of Floodplain Administrator

The Chief Building Official of the community is hereby designated as the community's local floodplain administrator. The floodplain administrator is authorized and directed to administer, implement, and enforce all provisions of this ordinance. If the local floodplain administrator position is unfilled, the Public Administrator shall assume the duties and responsibilities herein.

15-401.2 Permit Required.

A floodplain development permit shall be required before any development, construction, or substantial improvement is undertaken. No person, firm, corporation, government agency, or other entity shall initiate any floodplain development or substantial improvement or cause the same to be done without first obtaining a floodplain development permit.

§15-401.3 Duties of the Floodplain Administrator

1. Duties of the floodplain administrator shall include, but not be limited to the following.
 - a. Review, approve, or deny all applications for floodplain development permits.
 - b. Review all development permit applications to assure that sites are reasonably safe from flooding and that the permit requirements of this Chapter have been satisfied.
 - c. Review applications for proposed development to assure that all necessary permits have been obtained from those federal, state, or local governmental agencies from which prior approval is required.
 - d. Review all subdivision proposals and other proposed new development, including manufactured home parks or subdivisions, to determine whether such proposals will be reasonably safe from flooding.
 - e. Notify adjacent communities and the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources prior to any alteration or relocation of a watercourse, and submit evidence of such notification to the Federal Emergency Management Agency.
 - f. Assure that maintenance is provided within the altered or relocated portion of said watercourse so that the flood-carrying capacity is not diminished.
 - g. Verify, record, and maintain a record of the actual elevation (in relation to mean sea level) of the lowest floor, including the basement, of all new or substantially improved structures in the floodplain.
 - h. Verify, record, and maintain a record of the actual elevation (in relation to mean sea level) to which new or substantially improved structures have been floodproofed.
 - i. Verify, record, and maintain a record of all improved or damaged structures to ensure compliance with standards in applicable sections. Track the value of improvements

and market value with permits. Also, ensure consistent market value estimations to evaluate against damaged or improved values.

- j. Ensure a comprehensive development plan as amended is consistent with this ordinance.
- k. In the event the floodplain administrator discovers work done that does not comply with applicable laws or ordinances, the floodplain administrator shall revoke the permit and work to correct any possible violation in accordance with this ordinance.

§15-401.4. Application For Permit and Demonstration of Compliance.

1. To obtain a floodplain development permit, the applicant shall first file an application in writing on a form furnished for that purpose. Every such application shall:
 - a. Identify and describe the proposed development and estimated cost to be covered by the floodplain development permit.
 - b. Describe the land on which the proposed development is to be done by lot, block, tract, house, and street address, or similar description that will readily identify and definitively locate the proposed building or development.
 - c. Indicate the use or occupancy for which the proposed development is intended.
 - d. Be accompanied by plans and specifications for proposed construction.
 - e. Be signed by the permittee or his authorized agent who may be required to submit evidence to indicate such authority.
2. If any proposed development is located entirely or partially within a floodplain, applicants shall provide all information in sufficient detail and clarity to enable the floodplain administrator to determine that:
 - a. All such proposals are consistent with the need to minimize flood damage;
 - b. All utilities and facilities such as sewer, gas, water, electrical, and other systems are located and constructed to minimize or eliminate flood damage;
 - c. Structures will be anchored to prevent flotation, collapse, or lateral movement;
 - d. Construction materials are flood resistant;
 - e. Appropriate practices to minimize flood damage have been utilized; and
 - f. Electrical, heating, ventilation, air conditioning, plumbing, and any other service facilities have been designed and located to prevent the entry of floodwaters.
3. For all new and substantially improved structures, an elevation certificate based upon the finished construction certifying the elevation of the lowest floor, including the basement, and other relevant building components shall be provided to the floodplain administrator and be completed by a licensed surveyor, engineer, or architect.
4. When floodproofing is utilized for an applicable structure, a floodproofing certificate shall be provided to the floodplain administrator and be completed by a licensed professional engineer or architect.

5. For all development proposed in the floodway, no-rise certification shall be provided to the floodplain administrator and be completed by a licensed professional engineer.
6. Any other such information as reasonably may be required by the floodplain administrator shall be provided.
7. Letters of Map Revision; Federal regulations in Title 44 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Chapter 1, Part 65.5 and 65.6 allow for changes to the special flood hazard area through a Letter of Map Revision (LOMR) or a Letter of Map Revision Based on Fill (LOMR-F), provided the community determines that the land and any existing or proposed structures that would be removed from the floodplain are “reasonably safe from flooding.” The community acknowledgment from asserting this is required for LOMR and LOMR-F applications and must be signed by the floodplain administrator. The floodplain administrator shall not sign a community acknowledgment form unless all criteria set forth in the following paragraphs are met:
 - a. The applicant shall obtain a floodplain development permit before applying for a LOMR or LOMR-F.
 - b. The applicant shall demonstrate that the property and any existing or proposed structures will be “reasonably safe from flooding,” according to the minimum design standards in FEMA Technical Bulletin 10-01.
 - c. All requirements listed in the Simplified Approach in FEMA Technical Bulletin 10-01 shall be met and documentation from a registered professional engineer shall be provided. If all of these requirements are not met, the applicant must provide documentation in line with the Engineered Approach outlined in FEMA Technical Bulletin 10-01.

§15-401.5. Flood Data Required.

1. All Zone A areas on the FIRM are subject to inundation of the base flood; however, the base flood elevations are not provided. Zone A areas shall be subject to all development provisions of this ordinance. If Flood Insurance Study data is not available, the community shall utilize any base flood elevation or floodway data currently available from federal, state, or other sources, including from a study commissioned by the applicant pursuant to best technical practices.
2. Until a floodway has been designated, no development or substantial improvement may be permitted within the floodplain unless the applicant has demonstrated that the proposed development or substantial improvement, when combined with all other existing and reasonably anticipated developments or substantial improvements, will not increase the water surface elevation of the base flood more than one (1) foot at any location as shown in the Flood Insurance Study or on base flood elevation determinations.

§15-401.6. Variance and Appeals Procedures

1. The Board of Adjustment as established by the City of Ralston shall hear and decide appeals and requests for variances from the requirements of this Chapter.

2. The Board of Adjustment shall hear and decide appeals when it is alleged that there is an error in any requirement, decision, or determination made by the Chief Building Official in the enforcement or administration of this ordinance.
3. Any person aggrieved by the decision of the Board of Adjustment or any taxpayer may appeal such decision to the District Court as provided in *Nebraska Revised Statutes* Section 19-912.
4. In evaluating such appeals and requests, the Board of Adjustment shall consider the technical evaluation, all relevant factors, standards specified in other sections of this ordinance, and:
 - a. The danger to life and property due to flooding or erosion damage;
 - b. The danger that materials may be swept onto other lands to the injury of others;
 - c. The susceptibility of the proposed facility and its contents to flood damage and the effect of such damage on the individual owner; future owners, and neighboring properties;
 - d. The importance of the services provided by the proposed facility to the community;
 - e. The necessity of the facility of a waterfront location, where applicable;
 - f. The availability of alternative locations that are not subject to flooding or erosion damage, for the proposed use;
 - g. The compatibility of the proposed use with existing and anticipated development;
 - h. The relationship of the proposed use to the comprehensive plan and floodplain management program for that area;
 - i. The safety of access to the property in times of flood for ordinary and emergency vehicles;
 - j. The expected heights, velocity, duration, rate of rise, and sediment transport of the floodwaters and the effects of wave action, if applicable, expected at the site; and,
 - k. The costs of providing governmental services during and after flood conditions including emergency management maintenance and repair of public utilities and facilities such as sewer, gas, electrical, water systems, streets, and bridges.

§ 15-401.7. Conditions for Variances.

1. Variances shall only be issued upon a showing of good and sufficient cause and also upon a determination that failure to grant the variance would result in an exceptional hardship to the applicant.
2. Variances shall only be issued based upon a determination that the granting of a variance will not result in increased flood heights.
3. Variances shall only be issued based upon a determination that the granting of a variance will not result in additional threats to public safety, extraordinary public expense, create nuisances, cause fraud on or victimization of the public, or conflict with existing local laws or ordinances.

4. Generally, variances may be issued for new construction and substantial improvements to be erected on a lot of one-half acres or less in size contiguous to and surrounded by lots with existing structures constructed below the base flood level, providing items 5-10 below have been fully considered. As the lot size increases beyond one-half acre, the technical justification required for issuing the variance increases.
5. Variances may be issued for the repair or rehabilitation of historic structures upon a determination that the proposed repair or rehabilitation will not preclude the structure's continued designation as a historic structure on the National Register of Historic Places and the variance is the minimum necessary to preserve the historic character and design of the structure.
6. Variances shall not be issued within any designated floodway if any increase in water surface elevations along the floodway profile during the base flood discharge would result.
7. Variances shall only be issued upon a determination that the variance is the minimum necessary, considering the flood hazard, to afford relief.
8. Variances shall only be issued in the minimum necessary, considering the flood hazard, to afford relief upon the determination of the following:
 - a. A showing of good and sufficient cause;
 - b. A determination that failure to grant the variance would result in exceptional hardship to the applicant, and;
 - c. A determination that the granting of a variance will not result in increased flood heights, additional threats to public safety, extraordinary public expense, create nuisances, cause fraud on or victimization of the public, or conflict with existing local laws or ordinances.
9. The applicant shall be given a written notice over the signature of a community that the issuance of a variance to construct a structure below the base flood level will result in increased premium rates for flood insurance up to amounts as high as \$25 for \$100 of insurance coverage and also that such construction below the base flood level increases risks to life and property. Such notification shall be maintained with the record of all variance actions as required by this Chapter.
10. All requests for variances and associated actions and documents, including the justification for their issuance, shall be maintained by the community.

§15-401.8. Enforcement

1. Violations

- a. Failure to obtain a floodplain development permit or the failure to structure or other development to be fully compliant with the provisions of this ordinance shall constitute a violation. A structure or other development without a floodplain development permit, elevation certificate, certification by a licensed professional

engineer of compliance with these regulations, or other evidence of compliance is presumed to be in violation until such time as documentation is provided.

2. Notices

- a. When the floodplain administrator or other authorized community representative determines, based on reasonable grounds, that there has been a violation of the provisions of this ordinance, the floodplain administrator shall give notice of such alleged violation as hereinafter provided. Such notice shall:
 - b. Be in writing;
 - c. Include an explanation of the alleged violation;
 - d. Allow a reasonable time for the performance of any remedial action required;
 - e. Be served upon the property owner or their agent as the case may require; and
 - f. Contain an outline of remedial actions that, if taken, will bring the development into compliance with the provisions of this ordinance.

3. Penalties

Violations of the provisions of this Chapter or failure to comply with any of its requirements (including violations of conditions and safeguards established in connection with grants of variances or special exceptions) shall constitute a misdemeanor. Any person, firm, corporate, or other entity that violates this ordinance or fails to comply with any of its requirements shall upon conviction thereof be fined not more than \$500, and in addition, shall pay all costs and expenses involved in the case. Each day such violation continues shall be considered a separate offense.

- a. The imposition of such fines or penalties for any violation or non-compliance with this ordinance shall not excuse the violation or non-compliance or allow it to continue. All such violations or non-compliant actions shall be remedied within an established and reasonable time.
- b. Nothing herein contained shall prevent the City of Ralston or other appropriate authority from taking such other lawful action as is necessary to prevent or remedy any violation.

§ 15-501. STANDARDS FOR FLOODPLAIN DEVELOPMENT.

15-501.1. General Provisions

1. Alteration or Relocation of a Watercourse

- a. A watercourse or drainway shall not be altered or relocated in any way that in the event of a base flood or more frequent flood will alter the flood-carrying characteristics of the watercourse or drainway to the detriment of upstream, downstream, or adjacent locations.

- b. No alteration or relocation shall be made until all adjacent communities that may be affected by such action and the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources have been notified and all applicable permits obtained. Evidence of such notification shall be submitted to the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

2. Encroachments

- a. When proposing to permit any of the following encroachments, the standards in Section 15-501.1(b) shall apply:
 - i. Any development that will cause a rise in the base flood elevations within the floodway; or
 - ii. Any development in Zones A, A1-30, and Zone AE without a designated floodway that will cause a rise of more than one foot in the base flood elevation; or
 - iii. Alteration or relocation of a stream; then
- b. The applicant shall:
 - i. Apply to FEMA for conditional approval of such action via the Conditional Letter of Map Revision process (as per Title 44 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Chapter 1, Part 65.12) prior to the permit for the encroachments; and
 - ii. Supply the fully approved package to the floodplain administrator including any required notifications to potentially affected property owners.

3. Floodway Overlay District

- a. Within any floodway, any new construction or substantial improvements shall be prohibited.

§15-501.2. ELEVATION AND FLOODPROOFING REQUIREMENTS.

1. Residential Structures

- a. In Zones A, AE, A1-30, and AH, all new construction and substantial improvements shall have the lowest floor, including the basement, elevated to or above one (1) foot.
- b. In Zone AO, all new construction and substantial improvements shall have the lowest floor, including the basement, elevated above the highest adjacent grade at least as high as one (1) foot above the depth number specified in feet on the FIRM or, if no depth number is specified on the FIRM, at least as high as three (3) feet.
- c. In the floodway, new structures for human habitation are prohibited.

2. Nonresidential Structures

- a. In Zones A, AE, A1-30, and AH, all new construction and substantial improvements shall have the lowest floor, including the basement, elevated to or above one (1) foot

above the base flood elevation or, together with attendant utility and sanitary facilities, floodproofed so that below one (1) foot above the base flood elevation:

- i. The structure is watertight with walls substantially impermeable to the passage of water and
 - ii. The structure has structural components with the capability of resisting hydrostatic and hydrodynamic loads and the effects of buoyancy.
 - iii. A registered professional engineer or architect shall certify that the standards of this subsection are satisfied. A floodproofing certificate shall be provided to the floodplain administrator as set forth in Section
- b. In Zone AO, all new construction and substantial improvements shall have the lowest floor elevated above the highest adjacent grade at least as high as one (1) foot above the depth number specified in feet on the FIRM or, if no depth number is specified on the FIRM, at least as high as three (3) feet; or, together with attendant utility and sanitary facilities, floodproofed so that below one (1) foot above the base flood elevation:
 - i. The structure is watertight with walls substantially impermeable to the passage of water and
 - ii. The structure has structural components with the capability of resisting hydrostatic and hydrodynamic loads and the effects of buoyancy.
- c. A registered professional engineer or architect shall certify that the standards of this subsection are satisfied. A floodproofing certificate shall be provided to the floodplain administrator as set forth in Section 15-401.

3. Critical Facilities

- a. New construction or substantial improvement of any critical facility is prohibited in all areas of the floodplain and the 0.2% annual chance floodplain unless all of the following provisions are met:
 - i. No feasible alternative site exists for the construction of an equivalent facility within the corporate or extraterritorial jurisdiction boundaries of the City of Ralston.
 - ii. The facility has the lowest floor, including the basement, of all structures, elevated to one (1) foot above the 0.2% annual chance flood elevation or, together with attendant utility and sanitary facilities, floodproofed so that below one (1) foot above the 0.2% annual chance flood elevation:
 1. The structure is watertight with walls substantially impermeable to the passage of water and
 2. The structure has structural components with the capability of resisting hydrostatic and hydrodynamic loads and the effects of buoyance.
 3. A registered professional engineer or architect shall certify that the standards of the subsection are satisfied. Such certification shall be

provided to the floodplain administrator as set forth in Section 15-401.

- iii. If the 0.2% annual chance floodplain is not identified, the facility shall have the lowest floor, including the basement, elevated to three (3) feet above the base flood elevation.
- iv. The facility has at least one access road connected to land outside the 0.2% annual chance floodplain that is capable of carrying emergency support vehicles and the top of the access road is not lower than the 0.2% annual chance flood elevation.

4. Space Below Lowest Floor

- a. All new construction and substantial improvements shall not have fully enclosed areas below the base flood elevations.
- b. Fully enclosed areas below the lowest floor (excluding basements) and below the base flood elevation shall be used solely for the parking of vehicles, building access, or limited storage of readily removable items.
- c. Fully enclosed areas below the lowest floor (excluding basements) and below the base flood elevation shall be designed to automatically equalize hydrostatic flood forces on exterior walls by allowing for the entry and exit of floodwaters. The size of such enclosed areas shall not exceed 299 square feet except for buildings where the minimum clearance height of the enclosed area is less than seven (7) feet. Designs for meeting this requirement must either be certified by a registered professional engineer or architect or meet or exceed the following minimum criteria:
 - i. A minimum of two openings having a net total area of not less than one (1) square inch for every one (1) square foot of enclosed space,
 - ii. The bottom of all openings shall not be higher than one (1) foot above grade, and
 - iii. Openings may be equipped with screens, louvers, valves, or other coverings or devices provided that they allow the automatic entry and exit of floodwaters.

5. Accessory Structures

- a. Structures accessory to a principal building may have the lowest floor below one foot above base flood elevation provided that the structure complies with the following requirements:
 - i. The structure shall not be used for human habitation.
 - ii. The use of the structure must be limited to the parking of vehicles or storage of items readily removable in the event of a flood warning.
 - iii. The floor area shall not exceed 800 square feet.
 - iv. The structure shall have a low damage potential.
 - v. The structure must be adequately anchored to prevent flotation, collapse, or other lateral movements.

- vi. The structure shall be designed to automatically provide for the entry and exit of floodwaters for the purpose of equalizing hydrostatic forces. Designs for meeting this requirement must either be certified by a registered professional engineer or architect or meet or exceed the following minimum criteria:
 - 1. A minimum of two openings having a net area of not less than one (1) square inch for every one (1) square foot of enclosed space.
 - 2. The bottom of all openings shall not be higher than one (1) foot above grade, and
 - 3. Openings may be equipped with screens, louvers, valves, or other coverings or devices provided that they allow the automatic entry and exit of floodwaters.
- vii. No utilities shall be installed except electrical fixtures in the structure, which must be elevated to or above one (1) foot above the base flood elevation or floodproofed so that below one (1) foot above the base flood elevation they are:
 - 1. Watertight and substantially impermeable to the passage of water; and,
 - 2. Capable of resisting hydrostatic and hydrodynamic loads and effects of buoyancy.
 - 3. A registered professional engineer or architect shall certify that the standards of this subsection are satisfied. A floodproofing certificate shall be provided to the floodplain administrator as set forth in Section 15-401.
- viii. The structure shall be constructed and placed on the building site so as to offer the minimum resistance to the flow of floodwaters.
- ix. If the structure is converted to another use, it must be brought into full compliance with the minimum standards governing such use.

6. Manufactured Homes

- a. Within any floodplain, manufactured homes shall be prohibited.

7. Existing Structures

- 8. The provisions of this ordinance do not require any changes or improvements to be made to lawfully existing structures. However, when an improvement is made to a structure in the floodplain, a floodplain development permit is required and the provisions of 5.2 (G) (ii-iv) shall apply.
- 9. Any addition, alteration, reconstruction, or improvement of any kind to an existing structure where the costs of which would equal or exceed fifty (50) percent of the pre-improvement market value shall constitute a substantial improvement and shall fully comply with the provisions of this ordinance.

10. Any addition, alteration, reconstruction, or improvement of any kind to an existing structure in the floodway shall comply with the provisions of this chapter.
11. Any addition, alteration, reconstruction, or improvement of any kind to an existing structure that will change the compliance requirements of the building shall require applicable documentation including an elevation certificate, floodproofing certificate, or no-rise certification.

15-501.3. DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION STANDARDS.

1. Anchoring

- a. All buildings or structures shall be firmly anchored to prevent flotation, collapse, or lateral movement of the structure resulting from hydrodynamic and hydrostatic loads, including the effects of buoyancy.

2. Building Materials and Utilities

- a. All buildings or structures shall be constructed with materials and utility equipment resistant to flood damage. All buildings or structures shall also be constructed by methods and practices that minimize flood and flood-related damages.
- b. All buildings or structures shall be constructed with electrical, heating, ventilation, plumbing, air conditioning equipment, and other service facilities that are designed and/or located so as to prevent water from entering or accumulating within the components during conditions of flooding.

3. Drainage

- a. Within Zones AO and AH, adequate drainage paths around structures on slopes shall be required in order to guide floodwaters around and away from proposed structures.

4. Water Supply and Sanitary Sewer Systems

- a. All new or replacement water supply and sanitary sewer systems shall be located, designed, and constructed to minimize or eliminate flood damages to such systems and the infiltration of floodwaters into the systems.
- b. All new or replacement sanitary sewage systems shall be designed to minimize or eliminate discharge from the system into floodwaters.
- c. On-site waste disposal systems shall be located and designed to avoid impairment to them or contamination from them during flooding.
- d. New or replaced septic systems in floodplains are prohibited.

5. Other Utilities

- a. All other utilities such as gas lines, electrical, telephone, and other utilities shall be located and constructed to minimize or eliminate flood damage to such utilities and facilities.
6. Storage of Materials
 - a. The storage or processing of materials that are in the time of flooding buoyant, flammable, explosive, or could be injurious to human, animal, or plant life is prohibited.
 - b. The storage of other materials or equipment may be allowed if not subject to major damage by floods and firmly anchored to prevent flotation or if readily removable from the area within the time available after the flood warning.
 7. Recreational Vehicles
 - a. Within any floodplain, recreational vehicles and recreational vehicle parks shall be prohibited.
 - b. Within any floodway, recreational vehicles and recreational vehicle parks shall be prohibited.
 8. Subdivisions
 - a. Subdivision proposals and other proposed new development, including manufactured home parks or subdivisions, be required to assure that:
 - i. All such proposals are consistent with the need to minimize flood damage;
 - ii. All public utilities and facilities, such as sewer, gas, electrical, and water systems are located, elevated, and constructed to minimize or eliminate flood damage.
 - iii. Adequate drainage is provided so as to reduce exposure to flood hazards, and;
 - iv. Proposals for development (including proposals for manufactured home parks and subdivision) of five acres or 50 lots, whichever is lesser, where base flood elevation data are not available, shall be supported by hydrologic and hydraulic analyses that determine base flood elevations and floodway information. The analyses shall be prepared by a licensed professional engineer in a format required by FEMA for Conditional Letters of Map Revision and a Letters of Map Revision.

§ 15-601. FLOOD FRINGE OVERLAY DISTRICT- (INCLUDING AO AN DAH ZONES).

§15-601.1. Permitted Uses.

Any use permitted in Section 15-701 shall be permitted in the Flood Fringe Overlay District. No use shall be permitted in the district unless the standards of Section 15-501 are met.

§ 15-601.2. Standards For the Flood Fringe Overlay District.

New construction or substantial improvements of any residential or nonresidential structure shall have the lowest floor, including the basement, elevated to or above one foot above the highest base flood elevation available, based on the effective FIRM or best available flood risk data, or, together with attendant utility and sanitary facilities, to be floodproofed so that below that level the structure is watertight with walls substantially impermeable to the passage of water and with structural components having the capability of resisting hydrostatic and hydrodynamic loads and effects of buoyancy. A registered professional engineer or architect shall certify that the standards of this subsection are satisfied. Such certification shall be provided to the Chief Building Official as set forth in Section 15-401.4(3).

§ 15-701. FLOODWAY OVERLAY DISTRICT.

§ 15-701.1 Permitted Uses.

Only uses having a low flood-damage potential and not obstructing flood flows shall be permitted within the Floodway District to the extent that they are not prohibited by any other ordinance. The following are recommended uses for the Floodway District:

1. Open space uses not requiring a closed building, such as agricultural cropland, livestock feeding, and grazing, or open public and private recreation areas.
2. Wire fences or other appurtenances may be constructed which would not constitute an obstruction or debris-catching obstacle to the passage of floodwaters.
3. Railroads, streets, bridges, public utility wires, and pipelines for transmission and local distribution.
4. Commercial excavation of materials from pits, strips, or pools; provided that no stockpiling of materials, products or overburden shall be such as to create a potential restriction to the passage of floodwaters.
5. Non-restrictive improvements in stream channel alignment, cross-section, and capacity in the normal maintenance thereof.
6. Uses of a type not appreciably damaged by floodwaters; provided, no structures for human habitation shall be permitted.

§ 15-701.2. Standards For the Floodway Overlay District.

The uses enumerated in Section 15-701.1 above shall only be permitted if certification by a registered professional engineer or architect is provided demonstrating that the development shall not result in any increase in water surface elevations along the floodway profile during the occurrence of the base flood discharge. These uses are subject to the standards of Sections 15-501 and 15-601. In Zone A, obtain a review and

reasonably utilize any flood elevation and floodway data available through Federal, State, or other sources or Section 15-501.2 of this Chapter, in meeting the standards of this Section.

§ 15-801. NONCONFORMING USE.

1. A structure or the use of a structure or premises which was lawful before the passage or amendment of the ordinance, but which is not in conformity with the provisions of this Chapter may be continued subject to the following conditions:
 - a. No such structure of use shall be expanded, changed, enlarged, or altered in a way that increases its nonconformity.
 - b. If such use is discontinued for six consecutive months, any future use of the building premises shall conform to this Chapter. The Utility Department shall notify the Building Inspector in writing of instances of nonconforming uses where utility services have been discontinued for a period of six months.
 - c. Uses or adjuncts thereof that are or become nuisances shall not be entitled to continue as nonconforming uses.
2. If any nonconforming use or structure is destroyed by any means, including flood, it shall not be reconstructed if the cost is more than 50% of the market value of the structure before the damage occurred except that if it is reconstructed in conformity with the provisions of this ordinance. This limitation does not include the cost of any alteration to comply with existing state or local health, sanitary, building, or safety codes or regulations or the cost of any alteration of a structure listed on the National Register of Historic Places or a State Inventory of Historic Places, provided that the alteration shall not preclude its continued designation.

§ 15-901. EFFECTIVE DATE.

This Chapter becomes effective upon passage by the Mayor and the City Council of the City of Ralston and Upon its publication as provided by law.

§ 15-1001. CONFLICTS.

Any and all ordinances which are in conflict herewith and hereby repealed.

§15-1101. AMENDMENTS.

1. The regulations, restrictions, and boundaries set forth in this Chapter may from time to time be amended, supplemented, changed, or repealed to reflect any and all changes in federal, state, or local regulations provided, however, that no such action may be taken until after a public hearing in relation thereto, at which citizens and parties in interest shall have an opportunity to be heard. Notice of the time and place of such hearing shall be published in a newspaper of general circulation in the City of Ralston. At least 10 days shall elapse between the date of this publication and the public hearing.
2. A copy of such amendments will be provided to the Federal Emergency Management Agency. The regulations of this Chapter are in compliance with the National Flood Insurance Program Regulations as published in Title 44 of the code of Federal Regulations and the 1983 Nebraska Flood Plain Management Act.

§ 15-1201. DEFINITIONS.

Unless specifically defined below, words or phrases used in this chapter shall be interpreted so as to give them the meaning they have in common usage and to give this Chapter its most reasonable application:

0.2% Annual Chance Floodplain- means the floodplain that would be inundated by the 0.2% annual chance flood and delineated on the Flood Insurance Rate Maps.

0.2% Annual Chance Flood Elevation- means the elevation to which floodwaters are expected to rise during a 0.2% annual chance flood.

Accessory Structure- shall mean a structure on the same parcel of property as the principal structure, the use of which is incidental to the use of the principal structure.

Area of Shallow Flooding- A designated AO or AH Zone on a community's Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) with a 1% or greater annual chance of flooding to an average depth of one to three feet where a clearly defined channel is unpredictable and where velocity flow may be evident. Such flooding is characterized by ponding or sheet flow.

Base Flood- shall mean the flood having 1% chance of being equaled or exceeded in any given year.

Base Flood Elevation- means the elevation to which floodwaters are expected to rise during the base flood.

Basement- shall mean any area of the building having its floor subgrade (below ground level) on all sides.

Building- means "structure." See definition for "structure."

Critical Facility- means any property that, if flooded, would result in severe consequences to public health and safety. Critical facilities include, but are not limited to facilities that produce, use, or store hazardous materials; hospitals, nursing homes, and housing likely to contain vulnerable populations; emergency support function facilities like police stations, fire stations, vehicle and equipment storage facilities, and emergency operations centers; public and private utility facilities vital to maintaining or restoring normal services to flooded areas before, during, and after a flood.

Development- means any man-made change to improved or unimproved real estate, including but not limited to the construction, reconstruction, renovation, repair, expansion, or alteration of buildings or other structures; the placement of manufactured homes; streets and other paving; utilities; filling, grading, and excavation; mining; dredging; drilling operations; storage of equipment or materials; or obstructions.

Existing Manufactured Home Park or Subdivision- means a manufactured home park or subdivision for which the construction of facilities for servicing the lots on which the

manufactured homes are to be affixed (including, at a minimum, the installation of utilities, the construction of streets, and either final site grading or the pouring of concrete pads) is complete before the effective date of the floodplain management regulations adopted by a community. **Expansion to an Existing Manufactured Home Park or Subdivision**- means the preparation of additional sites by the construction of facilities for servicing the lots on which the manufactured homes are to be affixed (including the installation of utilities, the construction of streets, and either final site grading or the pouring of concrete pads).

Flood or Flooding- means a general and temporary condition of partial or complete inundation of normally dry land areas.

Flood Fringe- is that area of the floodplain, outside of the floodway, that has a one percent chance of flood occurrence in any one year.

Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM)- means an official map of a community, on which the Flood Insurance Study has delineated the special flood hazard area boundaries and the risk premium zones applicable to the community.

Flood Insurance Study (FIS)- is the official report provided by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. The report contains flood profiles, as well as the Flood Insurance Rate Map and the water surface elevation of the base flood.

Floodplain- means any land area susceptible to being inundated by water from any source (see definition of "flooding"). Floodplain includes flood fringe and floodway. Floodplain and special flood hazard areas are the same for use by this ordinance.

Floodproofing- means any combination of structural and nonstructural additions, changes, or adjustments to structures that reduce or eliminate flood damage to real estate or improved real property, water and sanitary facilities, and structures and their contents.

Floodway or Regulatory Floodway- means the channel of a river or other watercourse and the adjacent land areas that must be reserved in order to discharge the base flood without cumulatively increasing the water surface elevation more than one foot.

Freeboard- means a factor of safety usually expressed in feet above a flood level for purposes of floodplain management. "Freeboard" tends to compensate for the many unknown factors that could contribute to flood heights greater than the height calculated for a selected size flood and floodway conditions, such as wave action, clogged bridge openings, and the hydrological effect of urbanization of the watershed.

Highest Adjacent Grade- means the highest natural elevation of the ground surface prior to construction next to the proposed walls of a structure.

Historic Structure- means any structure that is: (a) Listed individually in the National Register of Historic Places (a listing maintained by the Department of Interior) or preliminarily determined by the Secretary of the Interior as meeting the requirements for individual listing on the National Register; (b) Certified or preliminarily determined by

the Secretary of the Interior as contributing to the historical significance of a registered historic district or a district preliminarily determined by the Secretary to qualify as a registered historic district; (c) Individually listed on a state inventory of historic places in states with historic preservation programs which have been approved by the Secretary of the Interior; or (d) Individually listed on a local inventory of historic places in communities with historic preservation programs that have been certified either: (1) By an approved state program as determined by the Secretary of the Interior or (2) Directly by the Secretary of the Interior in states without approved programs.

Incidental Structure- means a structure attached to or incidental to a building. This includes retaining walls, fences, swimming pools, and decks that are not buildings, but which form part of a building project or which are used in association with a building.

Lowest Floor- means the lowest floor of the lowest enclosed area (including the basement). An unfinished or flood-resistant enclosure, usable solely for parking of vehicles, building access or storage, in an area other than a basement area, is not considered a building's lowest floor, provided that such enclosure is not built or modified so as to render the structure in violation of the applicable non-elevation design requirements of this ordinance.

Manufactured Home- means a structure, transportable in one or more sections, which is built on a permanent chassis and is designed for use with or without a permanent foundation when attached to the required utilities. The term "manufactured home" does not include a "recreational vehicle".

Manufactured Home Park or Subdivision- means a parcel (or contiguous parcels) of land divided into two or more manufactured home lots for rent or sale.

New Construction- for floodplain management purposes, "new construction" means structures for which the "start of construction" commenced on or after the effective date of the floodplain management regulation adopted by a community and includes any subsequent improvements to such structures.

New Manufactured Home Park or Subdivision- means a manufactured home park or subdivision for which the construction of facilities for servicing the lots on which the manufactured homes are to be affixed (including at a minimum, the installation of utilities, the construction of streets, and either final site grading or the pouring of concrete pads) is completed on or after the effective date of floodplain management regulations adopted by a community.

Obstruction- means any wall, wharf, embankment, levee, dike, pile, abutment, projection, excavation (including the alteration or relocation of a watercourse or drainway), channel rectification, bridge, conduit, culvert, building, stored equipment or material, wire, fence, rock, gravel, refuse, fill, or other analogous structure or matter which may impede, retard, or change the direction of the flow of water, either in itself or by catching or collecting debris carried by such water, or that is placed where the natural flow of the water would carry such structure or matter downstream to the damage or detriment of either life or property. Dams designed to store or divert water are not obstructions if permission for the construction thereof is obtained from the Department of

Natural Resources pursuant to the Safety of Dams and Reservoirs Act (Nebraska Revised Statutes 46-1601 to 46-1670 as amended).

Overlay District is a district in which additional requirements act in conjunction with the underlying zoning district(s). The original zoning district designation does not change.

Post-FIRM Structure- means a building that was constructed or substantially improved after December 31, 1974, or on or after the community's initial Flood Insurance Rate Map dated May 15, 1980, whichever is later.

Pre-FIRM Structure- means a building that was constructed or substantially improved on or before December 31, 1974, or before the community's initial Flood Insurance Rate Map dated May 15, 1980, whichever is later.

Principally Above Ground- means that at least fifty (51) percent of the actual cash value of the structure is above ground.

Recreational Vehicle- means a vehicle which is (i) built on a single chassis; (ii) 400 square feet or less when measured at the largest horizontal projections; (iii) designed to be self-propelled or permanently towable by a light-duty truck; and (iv) designed primarily not for use as a permanent dwelling but as temporary living quarters for recreational, camping, travel, or seasonal use.

Regulatory Flood Elevation- means the base flood elevation (BFE) plus a freeboard factor as specified in this ordinance.

Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA)- is the land in the floodplain within a community subject to one (1) percent or greater chance of flooding in any given year.

Start of Construction- means the date the floodplain development permit was issued, provided the actual start of construction, repair, reconstruction, rehabilitation, addition, placement, or other improvement was within 180 days of the permit date. "Start of construction" also includes substantial improvement, and means the date the building permit was issued, provided the actual start of construction, repair, reconstruction, rehabilitation, addition, placement, or other improvement was within 180 days of the permit date. The actual start means the first placement of permanent construction of a structure on a site, such as the pouring of slab or footings, the installation of piles, the construction of columns, or any work beyond the stage of excavation; or the placement of a manufactured home on a foundation. Permanent construction does not include land preparation, such as clearing, grading, and filling; nor does it include the installation of streets and/or walkways; nor does it include excavation for a basement, footings, piers, or foundations or the erection of temporary forms; nor does it include the installation on the property of accessory buildings, such as garages or sheds not occupied as dwelling units or not part of the main structure. For a substantial improvement, the actual start of construction means the first alteration of any wall, ceiling, floor, or other structural parts of a building, whether or not the alteration affects the external dimensions of the building.

Structure- means a walled and roofed building that is principally above ground, as well as a manufactured home and a gas or liquid storage tank that is principally above ground.

Subdivision- means the division or re-division of a lot, tract, or parcel of land by any means into two or more lots, tracts, parcels, or other divisions of land including changes in existing lot lines for the purpose, whether immediate or future, of the lease, partition by the court for distribution to heirs or devisees, transfer of ownership, or building or lot development.

Substantial Damage- means damage of any origin sustained by a structure whereby the cost of restoring the structure to its before-damage condition would equal or exceed 50 percent of the market value of the structure before the damage occurred.

Substantial Improvement- means any reconstruction, rehabilitation, addition, or other improvements of a structure, the cost of which equals or exceeds 50 percent of the market value of the structure before the "start of construction" of the improvement. This includes structures which have incurred "substantial damage," regardless of the actual repair work performed. The term does not, however, include either (1) any project for improvement of a structure to correct existing violations of state or local health, sanitary, or safety code specifications which have been identified by the local code enforcement official and which are the minimum necessary to assure safe living conditions, or (2) any alteration of a "historic structure," provided that the alteration will not preclude the structure's continued designation as a "historic structure"

Variance- is a grant of relief to an applicant from the requirements of this ordinance that allows construction in a manner otherwise prohibited by this ordinance where specific enforcement would result in unnecessary hardship.

Violation- means a failure of a structure or other development to be fully compliant with the community's floodplain management regulations. A structure or other development without the Elevation Certificate, other certifications, or other evidence of compliance required in this ordinance is presumed to be in violation until such time as that documentation is provided.

Watercourse- means any depression two feet or more below the surrounding land that serves to give direction to a current of water at least nine months of the year and that has a bed and well-defined banks.

Any and all Ordinances or portions thereof which are in conflict herewith are hereby repealed.


This Ordinance becomes effective after passage by the Mayor and City Council of the City of Ralston, Nebraska and upon its publication as provided by law.

DATED this 21st day of March 2023.

Signature page to follow.



CITY OF RALSTON, NEBRASKA



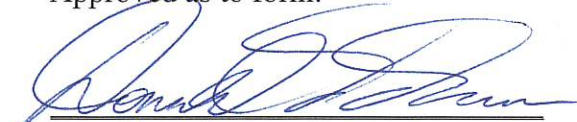
Donald A. Groesser, Mayor

ATTEST:



Maura Kelly, City Clerk

Approved as to form:



Donald F. Ficenec, City Attorney