

Office of the County Auditor
Auditor's Analysis

Council Bill No. 46-2022

Introduced: June 6, 2022

Auditor: Owen Clark

Fiscal Impact:

Per the Administration, there is no fiscal impact anticipated from this legislation because the duties associated with administering these requirements can be covered with existing County staff.

The Administration has also informed our Office that any incremental costs of complying with these new regulations on County projects would be minimal.

Purpose:

This bill amends provisions of the County Code related to nonresidential construction in a floodplain, which will require that certain equipment and systems be elevated at least 2 feet above the 100-year flood elevation and remove the ability for these items to be protected by alternate methods (such as water tightness and floodproofing.)

Other Comments:

Our Office was provided a FEMA report that indicates Howard County currently has a Class 6 rating in FEMA's Community Rating System, which provides the community a 20 percent discount on flood insurance premium rates. Per the Administration, the County's rating would drop to a Class 9 (which offers a 5 percent discount) if these changes were not approved.

Per the Administration:

- The Department of Inspections, Licenses and Permits will be the primary agency reviewing permits for plans that will trigger this new requirement.
- The Department of Planning and Zoning may be utilized for generally identifying properties in floodplains where these requirements might be called into question.
- The Department of Public Works oversees the County's Community Rating System program and ensures the County is up to date on all its rules.