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Wharton Journal-Spectator

NEWS SOURCE FOR WHARTON, TEXAS

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New maps might move much of Wharton out of floodplain

By **RONALD K. SANDERS** -

A large chunk of the city of Wharton may get removed from the 100-year floodplain, according to the latest draft of new contour maps shown to the city council on Monday.

The maps are just days old and far from final, but they could have significant bearing on flood insurance costs in the future.

Presently, 60 percent of the city lies within the 100-year floodplain. The draft shows nearly the entire city outside of it.

That affects the pocketbook. Flood insurance costs significantly less if the house or business is not within the floodplain.

The 100-year flood plain means a house or business has a one percent chance, in any given year, of flooding.

The new maps are expected to be completed and ready for public comment in December or January. The existing maps have not been revised since 1982.

Wharton and Bastrop counties are the first to get them in the Lower Colorado Basin.

The Colorado Valley Floodplain Coalition obtained a \$447,000 grant to make accurate flood insurance maps for these two counties, deemed to have the highest need along the lower basin of the Colorado River.

The Lower Colorado River Authority is under contract to produce the maps. Once completed, the Federal Emergency Management Agency must format and approve them.

LCRA's John McLeod has acted as liaison.

"I want you to know that your staff is doing its job to move this along," McLeod told the Wharton City Council on Monday.

"The coalition is a success story," added Martha Juch, the coalition's consulting engineer.

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