

## Initial Engineering Assessments (IEAs) Frequently Asked Questions

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1. What are Initial Engineering Assessments (IEAs) and what is their purpose?
  - a. An IEA is a tool that the Flood Control District has developed to perform a comprehensive and holistic assessment of drainage and flooding issues in communities throughout the County, to help the District identify and prioritize flood mitigation investment strategies, both for existing and for possible future development.
  - b. IEAs are important and innovative tools for the District to be able to assess risks, conceptual mitigation strategies, cost/benefit analyses, and other technical, legal, environmental, social, and fiscal feasibility issues within one area, and then to compare them with those same issues in other areas, so that “apples-to-apples” comparisons can be made as to where further development of District projects and mitigation strategies is made, and when.
2. Does an IEA in my community mean that the Flood Control District plans to fix all of our drainage and flooding issues?
  - a. No. The fact is that the District will never be able to “fix” all drainage and flooding issues in any Coconino County community. There will always be storm events that produce rain, snowmelt, and subsequent flooding that no amount of capital improvement infrastructure will be able to mitigate. Property owners and residents should make their own preparations for such occurrences, being careful not to have any negative impact on others in the community.
  - b. It is important to note that District funding is very limited and must be invested in areas and projects that mitigate the largest risks, with the greatest “bang for the buck.” This is important for everyone living in a FEMA Special Hazard Areas (where your mortgage lender requires flood insurance) because investments that reduce flood hazards can also reduce the premiums paid by all holders of flood insurance in the County.
  - c. The District Board of Directors (County Board of Supervisors) will use the information from the IEAs performed in communities throughout the County to determine where projects should be further developed and when, and to build a 10+ year plan to design and implement feasible projects that mitigate the greatest risks.
3. Why can't the County just clean out or upsize those clogged culverts that are contributing to my flooding issues?
  - a. Culverts may not always be the source of the problem. And, in fact cleaning them out, or making them larger may not be effective, and could produce adverse flooding impacts for downstream residents or communities. IEAs are intended to take a more holistic look at community-wide drainage and flooding issues and develop integrated strategies to ensure potential projects help address issues without making situations worse for others.

4. Does FEMA have anything to do with these IEAs?
  - a. No. The IEA is a tool developed and used only by the Flood Control District for the purposes described above. The intent of the IEAs is not to remap FEMA floodplains.
  - b. However, if and when the IEA process results in finished projects that are proven to reduce flood risks, those positive outcomes could be used by the District to remap FEMA designated floodplains, but only if the outcomes might be reductions in their impacts to the District's requirement to regulate development, and/or the cost of flood insurance under the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).
5. What do the outcomes of the IEA process mean for me and my family, and our ability to develop and live on our property?
  - a. The intent of the IEA process is to reduce flood risks. However this will likely not always be possible for every privately owned parcel.
  - b. Obtaining, and annually renewing flood insurance policies through the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) is critical for property owners in areas of flood risk. This is your first and only financial line of defense.
  - c. Property owners' abilities to develop their properties will always be guided by the best available data. This means that when a new building construction is proposed, it will be subject to either existing FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMS) or to the results of the IEA process – whichever best manages the flood risks.
  - d. Similarly, design and placement of septic systems will be guided by the best available data, whether it be information provided by property owners or the results of the IEA process.
6. The County just passed a sales tax to support road maintenance. How does that influence the IEA process?
  - a. Passage of Proposition 403 on 11/4/14, by 64% of voters County-wide established a 3/10 sales tax (3 cents on every \$10 spent by County residents and visitors) for the purpose of maintaining County roads. These funds are primarily intended to preserve the life of the nearly 1,000 miles of roadways that the County has maintenance responsibility over. Improvement of drainage infrastructure along these roads is part of this program. However, the funds were never intended to be utilized to address flooding issues. That is the role of the Flood Control District.
7. How can I learn more and be more engaged in the process?
  - a. One important part of the IEA process is public input. When an IEA is initiated in your community, you will be sent a letter requesting information about your experiences with drainage and flooding issues. This input will be incorporated into the final IEA products for your community.
  - b. For more information, please visit: <http://az-coconinocounty.civicplus.com/index.aspx?NID=1447>