



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 6, 2009

Contact: Boni Brewer
925-454-5015

**Increase in Fees on New Development Proposed
for Flood Protection and Storm Water Drainage Improvements**
Higher Fees Needed to Mitigate Development's Impact on Regional Storm Water Runoff

Zone 7 Water Agency staff is recommending that the Agency's Board of Directors implement its regional flood-protection and storm-water drainage program by increasing fees on new development to mitigate for the increased runoff generated by additional buildings and pavement.

A key mission of Zone 7, which serves eastern Alameda County including Livermore, Pleasanton, Dublin and Sunol, is to protect the community from flooding.

On February 18, the Zone 7 Board will consider staff's proposal to increase the current fee from 78.3 cents per square foot of new impervious surface area created by development, to \$1.44 per square foot. Impervious surface areas include roofs, patios, driveways, parking lots, roads, curbs and sidewalks – from new houses, office buildings, warehouses and stores -- that create storm-water runoff by preventing rainfall from soaking into the ground.

Zone 7's existing impact fee imposed upon new development is based on the costs associated with implementation of an old flood-protection master plan adopted in 1960, which was updated and replaced in 2006 by the agency's Stream Management Master Plan ("SMMP"). The SMMP is a multi-benefit general plan that identifies compatible uses of the Valley's flood-protection facilities. Funding for enhancements not related to flood protection could come from a variety of other sources, such as grants and contributions from recreational public agencies. For the flood-protection portion of the plan, the proposed development impact fee apportions to new

development -- not to existing users -- the share of costs of improvements needed specifically to manage the additional storm water runoff generated by new development. The share of costs for flood protection unrelated to new development would come from other sources.

”Fundamentally, this is about protecting life and property in the Valley and having development pay its own way,” said Zone 7 General Manager Jill Duerig.

Zone 7 has met with the development community and for the past year, has been working with the Valley’s three cities which have expressed concerns that an increase in the fee may result in an additional financial burden that threatens the viability of various development projects planned for the immediate future. While it understands that increasing fees imposed upon new development is not desirable in these difficult economic times, the Agency needs to act in an equitable and timely manner to fulfill its mission to protect the region’s residents and businesses from flooding by improving and expanding the regional system of flood protection and storm water drainage facilities.

For a new home creating 2,400 square feet of additional impervious surface, the proposed increase would result in a fee of \$3,456. For a commercial development with 20,000 square feet of impervious surface, the fee would be \$28,800.

The Board could consider potentially phasing the fee increase in over a period of a few years. Other implementation options may be discussed.

The proposed development impact fee will first be discussed at a Board committee meeting to be held at 4:30 p.m. on February 12 at Zone 7 headquarters, 100 North Canyons Parkway, Livermore. It will then be subject to a public hearing at the February 18 Board meeting, which will begin at 7 p.m., also at Zone 7 headquarters. More information on the SMMP is available on Zone 7’s web site, www.zone7water.com.

#####

Zone 7 Water Agency is one of the 10 active zones of the Alameda County Flood Control and Water Conservation District. The District was established by the State Legislature in October 1949 to solve problems of flooding, drainage, channel erosion and water supply and conservation in Alameda County. In 1957, by popular vote, Zone 7 became a special district governed by a

seven-member board of directors. Along with flood protection, Zone 7 supplies water to all of eastern Alameda County and a population of around 200,000. Treated water is sold wholesale to local retailers, including the cities of Livermore and Pleasanton, the Dublin San Ramon Services District, and the California Water Service Company. Zone 7 also distributes untreated water to local agriculture operations and golf courses.