



## Flood Control District Fact Sheet

### About the District

The Flood Control District of Maricopa County was created in 1959 to reduce the risk of flooding to people and property.

#### Who are we?

The District is a municipal corporation and political subdivision of the State of Arizona. The District is governed by a Board of Directors, which double as the County Board of Supervisors, with the advice of a citizens' Flood Control Advisory Board.

#### What we do?

- Build and maintain structures
- Identify and delineate floodplains
- Issue permits for development in floodplains
- Operate a flood warning system in coordination with local emergency responders
- Conduct flood hazard studies to identify risks of flooding and potential solutions, both structural and non-structural

#### How are we funded?

Under Arizona enabling legislation, the Flood Control District (FCD) is a special taxing district and is given the authority to levy a secondary property tax on property within Maricopa County. The FCD's flood control tax rate for Fiscal Year 2016 is \$0.1592 per \$1000 of assessed valuation. At this tax rate, a typical property owner with an assessed valuation of \$100,000 pays an annual flood control tax of \$15.92. Other sources of funding vary and include: federal grants, the sale or lease of properties, permit fees, and project cost-sharing with other entities.

The FCD's budget supports: routine operations (O&M, permitting etc.) and a capital budget that funds the FCD's Capital Improvement Program (CIP). Today, the FCD has an annual operating budget of approximately \$33 million, with 97 percent of the FCD's revenue coming from the secondary tax. In Fiscal Year 2016, the the CIP budget is \$68 million. Key to capital projects is local cost share with governments and developers; except in unusual circumstances the FCD requests at least a 50 percent cost share.

The Board of Directors have developed a Strategic Financial Plan for the FCD recognizing that significant financial constraints limit the FCD's ability to fund capital projects. As a result, varying funding strategies are being pursued including emphasis on a 50/50 cost share by project partners; mirroring the County General Fund philosophy of a two month cash reserve plus, utilizing the remaining fund balance for capital projects. The Strategic Financial Plan has led to a reprioritization of the CIP procedure scoring which includes giving greater weight to:

- Project readiness and community prioritization
- Level of partner cost share with 50/50 as the baseline standard
- Adding economic development considerations

## The District's responsibilities break down as follows:

**Flood Hazard Identification:** The District conducts Area Drainage Studies, and develops Watercourse Master Plans for all of Maricopa County. These studies identify areas with flood risk as well as opportunities for potential solutions. Delineation studies survey specific reaches of rivers and washes and accurately identify the depth and velocity of flood waters within these water courses.

**Structures:** Based on flood risk priorities and if funding is available, the District builds flood control structures such as dams, levees, channels, basins, and storm drains. The District cost shares on structures and maintenance with cities and other agencies.

**Floodplain Use Permits and Inspections:** The Flood Control District issues Floodplain Use Permits for: Buckeye, Carefree, Cave Creek, Chandler, El Mirage, Gila Bend, Guadalupe, Litchfield Park, Mesa, Queen Creek, Surprise, Tolleson, Youngtown, and Wickenburg. The County Planning and Development Department issues Floodplain Use Permits at the One Stop Shop for unincorporated county.

The following communities have assumed floodplain management activities and permitting: Avondale, Fountain Hills, Gilbert, Glendale, Goodyear, Paradise Valley, Peoria, Phoenix, Scottsdale, and Tempe.

## Why Flood Control is still needed today?

During Maricopa County's early history, floods caused millions of dollars worth of damage to homes, businesses and farmland. Today, rapid population growth has expanded the urban area and development with the urban core has resulted in flooding outside of historical areas. Flooding during the 2014 monsoon storms demonstrated the need for additional structures and controls.

Continued collaboration with citizens, municipalities, agencies and developers is vital to ensuring that people and property remain safe from floods as the county continues to grow.

## Did you know?

- Approximately 2/3 of the state's major rivers run through Maricopa County (Agua Fria River, Gila River, Salt River, Verde River, Hassayampa River).
- Structures operated and maintained by the District:
  - 22 dams
  - 370 acres of basins
  - 122 miles of channels
  - 60+ additional structures (levees, drains, etc.)
- Flood hazard identification studies have been completed for over 45 percent (3,600 sq. miles) of the county.
- Floodplain delineation studies have been completed for 68 percent (4,000 miles) of county rivers and washes.
- The County has participated in the National Flood Insurance Program's Community Rating System since 1991. Through the FEMA accreditation process, the County is now at Class 4, which gives residents of unincorporated Maricopa County up to a 30 percent discount on their flood insurance.
- The Flood Control District provides on-demand weather, rainfall and streamflow information for use by cities and county emergency departments and National Weather Service. This includes 313 automatic rain gages, 175 automatic stream gages, and 36 automatic weather stations.
- An average of 380 floodplain use permits are processed by the county each year.
- The Small Project Assistance Program which provides up to \$250K match for small flood projects is available for municipalities that need rapid implementation. The Fiscal Year 2016 program includes \$3 million for 16 projects that mitigate flood hazards that are local in nature and pose a risk to a small number of citizens and property.
- Note: The Flood Control District coordinates with multiple federal, state and local agencies and implements the requirements of the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Arizona Department of Water Resources, and coordinates with the National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) on rehabbing five major structures which now protect areas of urban growth.