

# Kenai Peninsula Borough

## Planning Department – River Center

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### MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Brent Hibbert, Assembly President  
Members, Kenai Peninsula Borough Assembly

**THRU:** Charlie Pierce, Mayor *CP*  
Melanie Aeschliman, Planning Director *MA*

**FROM:** Samantha Lopez, Acting River Center Manager *SL*

**DATE:** January 7, 2021

**RE:** Ordinance 2021-03, Amending KPB 21.06.040, Administration, and KPB 21.06.070, "Development" Definition, for Floodplain Management Purposes (Mayor)

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Floodplain management within the borough is a critical service that the borough provides dating back to 1988. Per guidance issued by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), small or minor projects that do not involve filling, grading, or excavating may not be considered "development" for purposes of floodplain management regulations. Such projects do not increase the natural grade, do not obstruct floodwaters, and do not increase flood stages. FEMA has thus determined that minor projects may not meet the definition of "development", and are too small to warrant a full hydrologic and hydraulic (H&H) analysis, commonly referred to as a No-Rise Certification.

By amending the definition of "development", the code will align with FEMA's requirements, while also allowing the floodplain administrator to more objectively determine which projects do not meet the definition of development because it is a minor project. Should this code change fail, then moving forward all developments, even minor projects, in the floodway will require H&H analysis.

This ordinance will also amend borough code to clarify that the borough's planning department, as delegated to the borough's floodplain administrator, is responsible for issuing a final written determination as to whether or not a proposed project falls within the definition of development and therefore requires a permit for purposes of KPB 21.06 Floodplain Management.

Your consideration of this ordinance is appreciated.