CITY OF RICHLAND CENTER - AGENDA ITEM DATA SHEET

Agenda Item: Ordinance 2026-10: Repealing and Replacing Chapter 452 of the Code of Ordinances Pertaining to Floodplain Zoning

Requested & Presented by: Amanda Keller

Meeting Date: Planning Commission 10-28-2026 & Common Council 11-03-2026

Committee Review: Planning Commission – Public Hearing and Review

Background: The City of Richland Center currently regulates floodplain development under Chapter 452 of the Code of Ordinances, adopted in 2016. Proposed Ordinance 2026-10 would repeal and replace Chapter 452 in its entirety to incorporate updated floodplain information and current Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) regulatory standards.

The proposed ordinance maintains the City's existing floodplain zoning framework while updating and clarifying requirements for development, construction, permitting, nonconforming structures, floodplain map revisions, and administration. The replacement ordinance also incorporates the updated Richland County Flood Insurance Study, effective January 22, 2027.

The proposed ordinance language has been reviewed and approved by DNR. The existing administrative structure will be maintained, with the City Administrator retaining oversight of the Floodplain Zoning Administrator.

Summary of Major Updates:

AREA	2026 ORDINANCE UPDATE
Updated Floodplain Study & Mapping	Incorporates the updated Richland County Flood Insurance Study and applicable FEMA floodplain mapping that will become effective January 22, 2027.
State/Federal Standards	Updates ordinance language to correspond with current Wisconsin DNR and FEMA minimum floodplain standards. DNR's current model ordinance is intended to meet both NFIP and Ch. NR 116 requirements.
Floodplain Removal / Map Changes	Adds more detailed procedures for FEMA Letters of Map Revision/Amendment (LOMR, LOMR-F and LOMA), including DNR/FEMA approval and documentation requirements.
Development & Permitting	Provides clearer requirements for floodplain development permits and establishes that development without a required permit, or contrary to an approved permit, is a violation.
Construction Standards	Expands and clarifies standards for anchoring, flood-resistant materials, construction methods, drainage, utilities, mechanical equipment and floodproofing.
Public Works Projects	Adds specific standards for certain culvert and bridge replacement projects in Zone A, including documentation and use of available floodway data.
Campgrounds & Recreational Uses	Significantly expands standards for recreational vehicles, portable decks/landings, equipment, evacuation procedures, flood warnings and permitting.
Floodway Development	Strengthens engineering and documentation requirements and clarifies the prohibition against development that increases regional flood elevations.

Nonconforming Structures	Expands requirements and options for modifications, additions, repairs and reconstruction of existing nonconforming structures, including elevation and floodproofing standards.
Substantial Damage	Adds/clarifies City responsibilities for substantial-damage determinations, documentation and reporting to DNR.
Administration	Expands recordkeeping, substantial-damage documentation, permit administration and coordination with DNR/FEMA.
Definitions	Updates and expands terminology to correspond with current FEMA/DNR floodplain standards.

Implementation: The updated ordinance and floodplain information are being considered in advance of the effective date of the updated Richland County floodplain study. Required DNR/FEMA review and local adoption procedures will be completed as part of the ordinance adoption process.

Department Recommendation: Staff recommends approval of Ordinance 2026-10, Repealing and Replacing Chapter 452 of the Code of Ordinances Pertaining to Floodplain Zoning. The proposed ordinance incorporates updated floodplain information and current state and federal regulatory standards while maintaining the City's established floodplain zoning framework and administrative structure.

Financial Impact: None

Requested Action:

PLANNING: Motion to recommend Common Council approve and adopt Ordinance 2026-10, Repealing and Replacing Chapter 452 of the Code of Ordinances Pertaining to Floodplain Zoning.

COUNCIL: Motion to approve and adopt Ordinance 2026-10, Repealing and Replacing Chapter 452 of the Code of Ordinances Pertaining to Floodplain Zoning.

Attachment(s):

- Ordinance 2026-10: Repealing and Replacing Chapter 452 of the Code of Ordinances Pertaining to Floodplain Zoning