



**Work Session Meeting Agenda  
2 Park Drive South, Great Falls, MT  
Gibson Room, Civic Center  
March 17, 2020  
5:30 PM**

**CALL TO ORDER**

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

*(Public comment on agenda items and on any other matter that is within the jurisdiction of the City Commission. Please speak into the microphone, state your name and address for the record, and keep your remarks to a maximum of five (5) minutes.)*

**WORK SESSION ITEMS**

1. CDBG Consolidated Plan and Proposed Funding Priorities - Tom Micuda.
2. Geo-Technical & Foundation Policies - Craig Raymond.
3. Animal Shelter Request for Proposal - Direction from Commission.

**DISCUSSION POTENTIAL UPCOMING WORK SESSION TOPICS**

**ADJOURNMENT**

*City Commission Work Sessions are televised on cable channel 190 and streamed live at <https://greatfallsmt.net>. Work Session meetings are re-aired on cable channel 190 the following Thursday morning at 10 a.m. and the following Tuesday evening at 5:30 p.m.*

*Wi-Fi is available during the meetings for viewing of the online meeting documents.*

**UPCOMING MEETING SCHEDULE**

Work Session -- Tuesday April 7, 2020 5:30 p.m.

Commission Meeting -- Tuesday April 7, 2020 7:00 p.m.

# Planning and Community Development



## 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan Proposed Funding Priorities



City Commission Work Session | March 17, 2020

## Community Input on Funding Priorities

- Community Needs Survey – January 8 to February 7
  - ***529 Responses with significant public outreach***
- Presentation to the Council of Councils – January 28
- Focus Group Meeting – February 27
  - ***20 attendees including public officials, Neighborhood Councils, other City staff, non-profit service agencies***

# Survey Results

## Survey Results – Numeric Rankings

Issues Ranked on 1-4 scale, 4 being most important

### **(Public Services and Facilities)**

- *Youth Centers (3.21)*
- *Health/Mental Health Services (3.34)*
- *Youth Activities (3.28)*
- *Anti-Crime Programs (3.24)*
- *Veteran Services (3.06)*
- ***Neglected/Abused Children Centers and Services (3.48)***
- *Substance Abuse Services (3.21)*
- *Domestic Violence Services (3.05)*

## Survey Results – Numeric Rankings (cont)

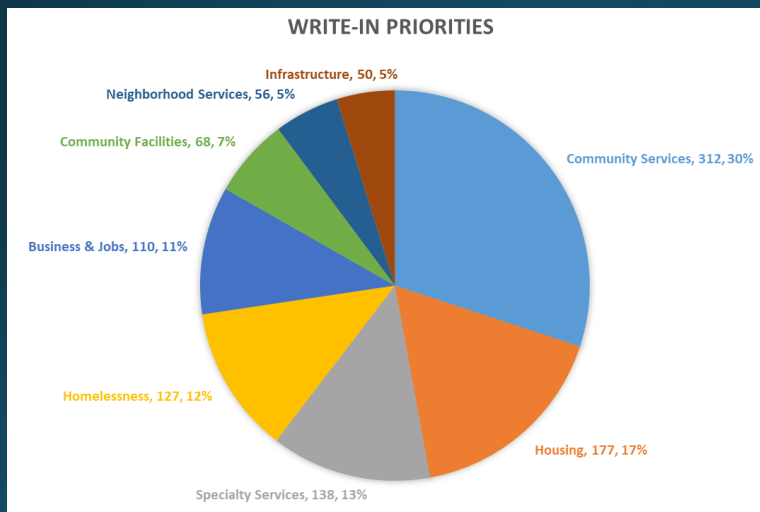
### (Additional High Priority Issues)

- *Cleanup of Abandoned Lots & Buildings (3.15)*
- *Job Creation/Retention (3.09)*
- *Affordable Single Family Housing (3.11)*

### (Homelessness)

- *Unaccompanied Youth (3.17)*
- *Homelessness Prevention (3.06)*
- *Job Placement (3.03)*

## Written Section Top 3 Needs



- **Community Services-30%**
- **Housing-17%**
- **Specialty Services-13%**
- **Homelessness-12%**
- **Business & Jobs-11%**

## Results of Focus Group Table Exercise

### Focus Group Table Exercise - Priorities

- 1) Community Services Identified by all 4 Tables
  - *Mental Health Services – specific mention in 2 Tables*
- 2) Homelessness – all 4 Tables
  - *Transitional Housing – 2 Tables*
  - *Permanent Supportive Housing – 3 Tables*
- 3) Housing – 3 of 4 Tables
- 4) Community Facilities 2 Tables
- 5) Jobs

# Proposed Priorities for Consolidated Plan

## 2015-2019 Consolidated Plan Priorities

### PRIORITIES

1. Public Improvements
2. Transitional Housing
3. Public Services
4. Homeownership
5. Housing Rehabilitation
6. Fair & Affordable Rental Housing
7. Economic Development

## 2020-2024 Proposed Consolidated Plan Priorities

### PRIORITIES

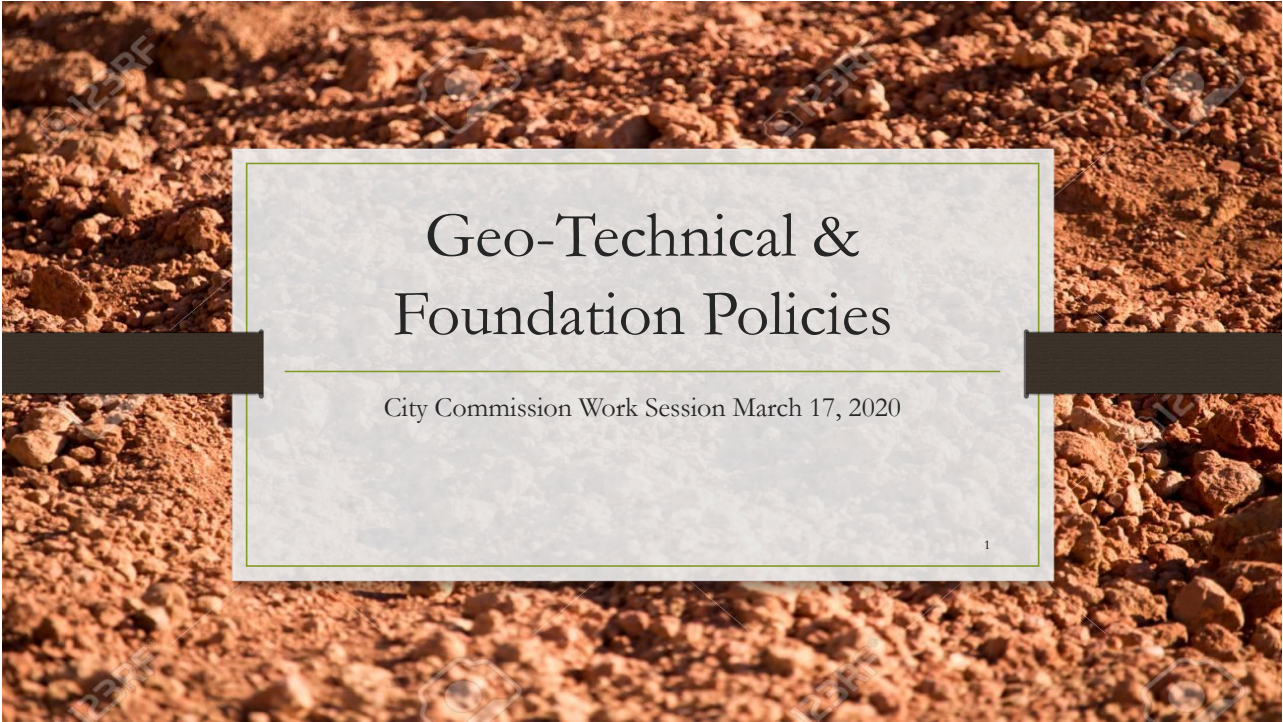
1. Public Services
2. Affordable Housing
3. Housing Rehabilitation
4. Fair Housing
5. Economic Development
6. Public Facilities and Improvements

## Staff Comments and Next Steps

- Priorities will need to meet a National Objective
- Public Service funding is capped at 15%
- Transitional Housing covered under Affordable Housing Priority
- Homelessness covered under Public Services
- Priorities covered under CDBG, HOME, and Revolving Loan Fund Programs

Next Step in the process – Development of Draft Plan and Public Comment

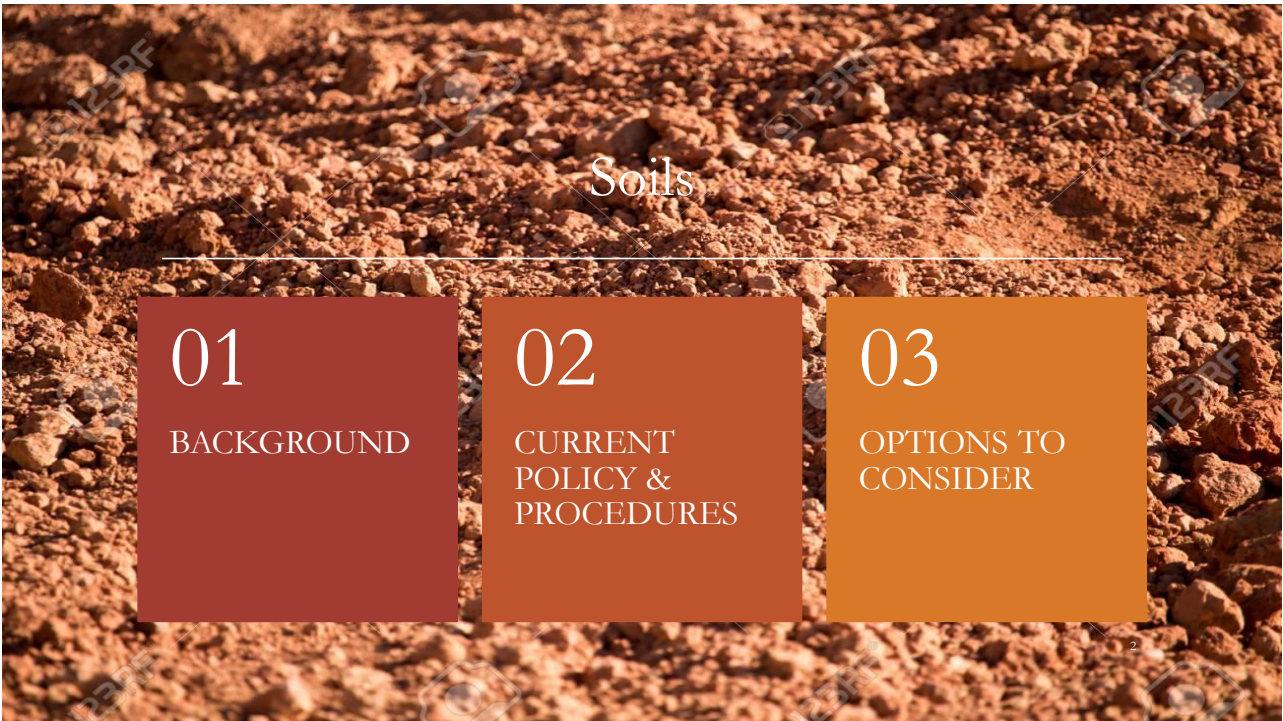




# Geo-Technical & Foundation Policies

City Commission Work Session March 17, 2020

1



## Soils

01

BACKGROUND

02

CURRENT  
POLICY &  
PROCEDURES

03

OPTIONS TO  
CONSIDER

2



## Background

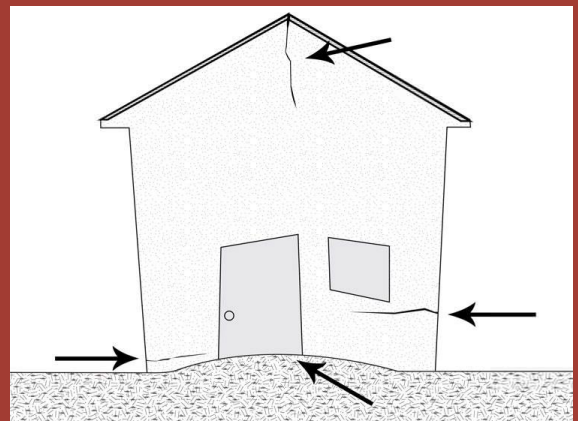
- Many areas within Great Falls contain what's known as "Fatty Clay Soils" or "Expansive Clay Soils"
- High Plasticity soils have microscopic mineral grains that are especially attractive to water
- Clay soils will expand when absorbing water (like a sponge) and shrink when dry
- Type and depth of soils is not known to be consistent and can be highly variable from one test boring to another



3

## Background

- Unmitigated expanding soils can have damaging effects on any structure
  - Swelling and/or uneven floors
  - Inoperable doors and windows
  - Cracked foundation walls and slabs
  - Cracked sheetrock
- Repairs can cost tens of thousands and in some cases hundreds of thousands of dollars
- The City, several contractors and engineers have been named in numerous lawsuits over the years as a result of damaged homes



4

# Current Policy & Procedures

- In 2008, City Staff drafted and published policy which required geo-technical testing, reports and recommendations for foundation design
  - New Residential
  - New Commercial
  - Some additions and extensive repairs/replacement
- Typical commercial projects include on-site 3<sup>rd</sup> party inspection and monitoring at specific milestones during construction
- On-site 3<sup>rd</sup> party monitoring not currently required on residential projects



5

DEPTH (ft.)		LITHOLOGY	WATER LEVEL	WELL COMPLETION	COLLECT				SOIL/ROCK VISUAL DESCRIPTION	REMARKS	DEPTH (ft.)
Sample Type	Time				Blew Counts	Recovery (ft)	N value	ROD%			
0										0	
				SS	08:15	1.5	5	(0.0') CONCRETE			
				SS	08:30	5	13	(1.0') Silty SAND (SM); mostly fine grained sand, trace fine gravel, some silt, loose, dry, light brown	(1.0') PID = 0.0 ppm		
5				SS	08:30	5	13	(5.0') Lean CLAY (CL); few fine-medium sand, trace silt, mostly clay, medium plasticity, stiff, moist, very dark greenish-gray, slight odor	(5.0') 5-5' Soil (5.0') PID = 10.0 ppm	5	
								(7.0') As Above: rock fragments			

6

## Current Policy & Procedures

- Lawsuits have continued resulting in risk:
  - Engineers
  - Contractors
  - Developers
  - Realtors
- Local engineers have largely stopped performing geo-technical evaluations and reports for residential projects unless under specific contracted terms
- Out of town firms may provide these services
  - Additional cost
  - Extensive delays



7

## Policy Options to Consider

### Building Code/Site Verification Emphasis Option:

- Requires initial evaluation and letter to determine next steps:
- Results may indicate that prescriptive path may be acceptable per code
- Results may also indicate that more extensive evaluation and detailed Geologic Hazards Plan and Report will be necessary
  - More intensive geologic review
  - Possible engineered structure design
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> party on-site special inspection and monitoring during construction



8

## Policy Options to Consider

### Market Driven Risk Determination Option:

- Provide substantive notification of risks:
  - Permit Applications
  - Certificates of Occupancy
  - Recorded at County Clerk & Recorder's Office
- Place burden on permit applicant and subsequent owners to educate themselves and determine appetite for risk
- No requirement for geo-technical analysis to obtain permits
- Streamlines permit process



9

## Discussion

City Commission Work Session March 17, 2020

10

## Geologic Hazards.

### A. Purpose and Intent.

1. Property within the City of Great Falls has areas that are susceptible to one or more geologic hazards occurring either on or affected by property which is proposed to be developed. A list of common geologic hazards found in Great Falls includes but is not limited to:
  - a. Expansive or unstable soils and/or rock;
  - b. Unstable or potentially unstable slopes;
  - c. Landslide or laterally unstable areas or potential landslide areas;
  - d. Flood inundation, debris flows, and debris fans;
  - e. Unstable fill;
  - f. Erosion and deposition areas, or highly erodible soils;
  - g. Rockfall;
  - h. Subsidence;
  - i. Shallow water tables;
  - j. Groundwater springs or seeps;
  - k. Flood-prone areas;
  - l. Collapsible soils;
  - m. Faults;
  - n. Upturned or steeply dipping bedrock;
  - o. Radon;
  - p. Problems caused by features or conditions on adjacent properties; and
  - q. Other general geologic or site problems.

2. Geologic hazards can be interrelated, and evaluation of geologic hazards requires comprehensive review and analysis. Development within the City of Great Falls should consider geologic hazards and consult maps or other information to conduct initial review of site hazards prior to site development.
3. Recognition of these hazards must be acknowledged by those intending to develop property within the City of Great Falls, in order to allow those developing property to minimize losses due to geologic conditions in the City, and to:
  - a. Protect human life, safety, and property;
  - b. Minimize damage to private property;
  - c. Minimize damage to public facilities, infrastructure, and utilities;
  - d. Provide flexible approaches to evaluating geologic hazards risk;
  - e. Reduce the amount of effort and expenditures associated with response, cleanup, and repair following a geologic hazard event;
  - f. Educate the public about the potential risks associated with geologic hazards in Great Falls;
  - g. Require applicants who desire to develop property in the City to evaluate, mitigate as necessary, and be responsible for geologic hazards related to the property to be developed; and
  - h. Require applicants to comply with requirements in the International Building Code and International Residential Code as applicable.
4. Applicants who intend to develop property within the City of Great Falls assume liability and responsibility to evaluate for, and mitigate known, geologic hazards on their proposed development sites.
5. The assumption of liability in this Chapter shall be placed on development permit applications, permits, certificates of occupancy and other documents associated with



the development, as determined by the Director of Planning and Community Development.

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- g. Require applicants who desire to develop property in the City to evaluate, mitigate as necessary, and be responsible for geologic hazards related to the property to be developed.

B. Applicability and Exemptions.

1. Applicability of Geologic Hazards Evaluation. Unless exempt under this chapter, the geologic hazards standards in this section shall apply to any of the following activities or scenarios:
  - a. Any building permit or property improvement permit for construction of a new building with a building footprint of two hundred (200) square feet or larger and that is located on a permanent foundation. Applications and permits for additions and alterations shall remain on record with the City;
  - b. Any application or development activity requiring a grading permit;
  - c. Any of the following development application types:
    - i. Major or Minor Development Plans, defined as:
      - (1) Commercial development \*\*\*\*;
      - (2) Residential development \*\*\*\*.
    - ii. Major or Minor Subdivisions as defined in Chapter \*\* of this Title 17; and/or
  - d. Any application for development or redevelopment on any property with slopes exceeding seventeen (17) percent within the limits of disturbance.
2. The following applications and development activities are automatically required to prepare a Geologic Hazards Plan and Report:

- a. Major Development Plans;
  - b. Major Subdivisions; or
  - c. Any property with slopes exceeding seventeen (17) percent within the limits of disturbance.
3. The Planning and Community Development Director, may, at the Director's discretion, have any geologic hazard evaluation reviewed by an independent qualified professional geologist or a qualified professional geotechnical engineer. This separate review shall supplement the Initial Site Evaluation, any Geologic Hazards Plan and Report, and the City's review, and will be considered by the City in making a final determination on the associated land developmental proposal. The cost of having an independent review and analysis of geological hazard evaluation reports shall be borne by the developer.
4. Exemptions from Geologic Hazards Evaluation.
- a. The following types of development activities are exempt from Geologic Hazards Evaluation in this section:
    - i. Fences;
    - ii. Lighting;
    - iii. Booms;
    - iv. Poles;
    - v. Signs over \*\*\* square feet in total area;
    - vi. Decorations;
    - vii. Machinery or equipment;
    - viii. Decorative or perimeter walls that do not serve to retain soil, unless supporting a load or other weight surcharge;
    - ix. Any replat of a previous subdivision in which no new structures or new building lots are being created and no new development is proposed; and/or
    - x. Sites with existing studies or reports that are 10 years or older shall be subject to the procedure herein to determine whether the existing study or report is sufficient for the proposed development application, or if changes in conditions warrant a new evaluation.
  - b. An exemption from these standards does not exempt the applicant from liability and responsibility to evaluate and mitigate known geologic hazards on a site.

C. Initial Site Evaluation and Letter:

1. To provide initial evaluation of potential geologic hazards concerns related to development activities, a Site Evaluation and Letter shall be required for applications identifying load bearing capabilities as set forth in the IRC and IBC, as applicable, unless exempted under this Chapter. An applicant may, at its discretion and cost, proceed directly to a Geologic Hazard Plan and Report without conducting an Initial Site Evaluation and Letter.
  - a. The Site Evaluation and Letter shall also be required for the following application types:
    - i. Minor Development Plans;
    - ii. Minor Plats; and
    - iii. Property Improvement Permits.
  2. Procedure.
    - a. Site Evaluation. The property subject to the proposed application or development activity shall be evaluated by a qualified professional geotechnical engineer at the expense of the property owner or applicant.
    - b. Evaluation Letter. Following the site evaluation, the qualified professional geologist or a qualified professional geotechnical engineer shall submit a signed and stamped letter to the Planning and Community Development Director providing details of the site evaluation. At a minimum, the letter shall:
      - i. Include the date and location of the site visit;
      - ii. Include photos of the lot and any geologic hazard conditions;
      - iii. Include a detailed narrative description of the lot conditions, including slopes; evidence of drainage and any other potential hazards on the site that are listed in this Chapter; and
      - iv. Identify load capacity of the proposed development property, pursuant to the International Building Code and International Residential Code, as applicable.
      - v. The Evaluation Letter may also include, at the qualified professional's discretion:
        - (1) Initial recommendations, if any, to mitigate the potential geologic hazards conditions;

- (2) Determinations as to whether or not the proposed development activity for the site would result in an increased risk to geologic hazards on the site or on adjacent properties; and
- (3) Assessment and recommendation whether or not further geologic or engineering study is required to address geologic hazard risk and/or mitigation.

i. Based on the findings and recommendations of the site evaluation and letter, the Planning and Community Development Director, in consultation with the City Engineer may:

(1) If the load capacity is greater than the minimum set forth in the International Building Code and International Residential Code, as applicable, move the application or permit forward through the applicable approval procedure; or

(2) If the load capacity is less than the minimum set forth in the International Building Code and International Residential Code, as applicable, require a Geologic Hazards Plan and Report, with mitigation, and on-site development oversight from a qualified professional geologist or a qualified professional geotechnical engineer.

#### D. Geologic Hazards Plan and Report.

1. The purpose of the Geologic Hazards Plan and Report is to:
  - a. Identify the geologic hazards affecting the development site;
  - b. Assess proposed development that could pose a more significant geologic hazard impact;
  - c. Analyze potential geologic hazard impacts the proposed development could have on surrounding properties or public facilities;
  - d. Identify appropriate mitigation measures that shall be employed to reduce or avoid the identified hazards to acceptable levels so that development may proceed;
  - e. Require on-site monitoring and assessment by a qualified professional geologist or a qualified professional geotechnical engineer during the project;
  - f. Recommend areas that are not suitable for the proposed development or that pose unacceptable risks for development; and
  - g. Include the requirements or reporting pursuant to the International Building Code and International Residential Code, as applicable.



2. Geologic Hazards Analysis. A Geologic Hazards Plan and Report, when required, shall be prepared by a qualified professional geologist or a qualified professional geotechnical engineer. The Geologic Hazards Plan and Report shall address the topics listed in this subsection, where applicable. The level of detail and emphasis may vary due to specific geologic conditions or hazard risks of the site or the scale and type of proposed development activity.
  - a. General Project Description and Certification.
    - i. A project description shall be included that presents the overall proposed project details including the size and location of the project and the existing and proposed land uses.
    - ii. The qualified professional geologist or qualified professional geotechnical engineer preparing or certifying the Plan and Report shall sign the Plan and Report.
  - b. Conclusions and Recommendations. The Geologic Hazard Plan and Report shall address the following:
    - i. Whether the intended use of the land is compatible with any identified or potential geologic hazards or constraints;
    - ii. The development of mitigation procedures or design changes necessary to minimize or abate any hazardous condition, if such mitigation or design change is possible. Each hazardous condition requires a recommendation, which may be a recommendation that the conditions are too severe to warrant development;
    - iii. The long-term stability and safety of the proposed project. Discuss the critical planning and construction aspects of the development, including the suitability of using irrigated landscaping, the stability of earth materials, the appropriateness of the proposed grading plans, the need for selective location of project facilities, and the static and dynamic parameters for the design of structures; as applicable;
    - iv. Include the reporting requirements in the International Building Code and International Residential Code, as applicable.
    - v. Identify that qualified professional geologist or qualified professional geotechnical engineer which will be on site, monitoring, and assessing development to ensure compliance with conclusions, recommendations and mitigation; and

vi. Clearly state the geologic basis for all conclusions.

E. Mitigation Measures. In cases where geologic hazards are identified and require a Geologic Hazard Plan and Report, appropriate mitigation measures shall be required in conjunction with the approval of the project, if approval is recommended. Such mitigation measures may include, but not limited to:

1. Changes to the proposed land use configuration;
2. Changes to the location of proposed structures;
3. Modification of land use types;
4. Modification of lot boundaries or building envelopes;
5. Special foundation designs and/or over-excavation;
6. Mitigation of rock fall and/or debris flow;
7. Grading, drainage, and erosion controls;
8. Geotechnical engineering solutions; and
9. Limitations on irrigated landscapes.

F. Review Procedures.

1. The Geologic Hazard Plan and Report shall be reviewed by the Planning and Community Director and/or City Engineer as part of the review of the land development application. The City's review shall determine whether the findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the Geologic Hazard Plan and Report have been incorporated into the design of the Major or Minor Development Plan, Subdivision Plat, Drainage and Erosion Control Plan, Grading Plan, and public improvement construction drawings, or other required documents. If the city review determines that the submitted study is incomplete or fails to comply with the standards and requirements set forth in this section, the Planning Director may require new or supplemental information.
2. Recommendations of the Geologic Hazards Plan and Report shall be incorporated, as applicable, into the approval of the Major or Minor Development Plan, Subdivision Plat, Drainage and Erosion Control Plan, Grading Plan, public improvement construction drawings, and building construction plans.
3. The qualified professional geologist or qualified professional geotechnical engineer preparing or certifying the Plan and Report shall ensure on-site monitoring of the development to ensure compliance with the mitigation measures set forth in the Geologic Hazard Plan and Report.

4. Before permanent foundation structures are placed in the development, the qualified professional geologist or qualified professional geotechnical engineer must provide the Planning and Community Development Director with a letter of compliance with the Geologic Hazards Plan and Report and mitigation procedures.
5. Applicants who intend to develop property within the City of Great Falls assume liability and responsibility to evaluate for, and mitigate known, geologic hazards on their proposed development sites.
6. The assumption of liability in this Chapter shall be placed on development permit applications, permits, certificates of occupancy and other documents associated with the development, as determined by the Director of Planning and Community Development.