



FEMA

Above the Flood

Tillamook, OR – The completion of a building elevation project came none too soon for the tenants of Northport Plaza along U.S. Highway 101 north of the city center of Tillamook, Oregon. The most recent flooding of the area occurred just six weeks after the Plaza’s two buildings had been raised by about 3 feet, which was enough to put the floors about 1 foot above the highest level reached by the floodwaters in early December 2007.

The Western Royal Inn across the highway from Northport Plaza has the distinctive ground-level skirting of an elevated building. In 2004, the inn was raised above the Base Flood Elevation (BFE) for the area, and it has stayed high and dry during subsequent floods.

The city encouraged businesses to move to the 2-mile stretch of U.S. 101 when they annexed it 25 years ago. Many of the business owners who accepted the invitation have done well along this busy stretch of coastal highway. But the almost annual flooding of the area by the Wilson River and its associated sloughs, particularly the major, damaging flood of 1996, has caused city officials to re-think that initial pro-development stance. Businesses are now being encouraged to leave the flood zones and move to higher ground.

After the 1996 flood, Tillamook County became proactive in mitigating flood damages, according to Bill Campbell, director of the county’s Department of Community Development. The county began to work with property owners in the flood-prone areas to secure funding available through FEMA’s Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP).

Funding to assist communities plan and implement measures to reduce flood losses is also available through FEMA’s Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) Program. Part of the funds used to elevate the Northport Plaza and to acquire two commercial properties along U.S. 101 were provided by the FMA Program.



Tillamook County,
Oregon



Quick Facts

- Year:
1996
- Sector:
Public/Private Partnership
- Cost:
Amount Not Available
- Primary Activity/Project:
Elevation, Structural
- Primary Funding:
Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA)