

[Manitou takes a step to move city hall out of harm's way](#)

Colorado Springs Gazette

Manitou Springs officials are trying to land a \$25 million federal grant to move City Hall operations to a new building. Built in the late 1800s, the existing facility is in a flood plain, the city's flood recovery manager Shelley Cobau said Monday. A draft of the grant was submitted to the state Friday, but it will likely require additions and revisions after officials examine it, she said. The grant would also have to pass through Manitou's City Council and mayor, if awarded, to ensure that the city would accept responsibility for a required 25 percent match. Cobau said the city hopes the Colorado Department of Local Affairs will help with the match. City Hall is at 606 Manitou Ave., on the town's main drag, and it houses the city administration, clerk and finance offices, as well as the fire and police departments. When a flash flood warning occurs, city operations nearly come to a halt: Nonessential staff is sent home, and the police and fire departments relocate to the Manitou Springs Elementary School, Cobau said. "We'd like to see all police stations, fire stations and emergency facilities out of this flood plain, for obvious reasons," Cobau said. The City Hall was damaged by flooding in 2013 and this year, said Manitou Police Chief Joe Ribeiro. Manitou officials have identified three possible locations for its new City Hall, Cobau said. All of which are "outside the limits of the 500-year flood plain." Cobau said she could not disclose the locations. Ribeiro said he supports the project because of how many of his department's operations are shut down in a flood. The police department must evacuate and move all vehicles, and it remains at constant risk of losing files and records if disaster strikes. "We would have the ability to provide continuous service, and we would be able to better operate emergency services during a disaster," Ribeiro said. "I am a champion of relocating our city hall."