

BUILDING IN THE FLOODPLAIN

Development Services Department
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What is a floodplain and how is it determined?

The Province of BC and BC municipalities have mapped the flood hazard areas of many rivers, streams, and lakes. Applicable to the City of Terrace,

the floodplain of the Skeena and Kalum Rivers have been mapped.

The floodplain is the area that is likely to be impacted by a 1-in-200-year flood event. This means that in any given year, there is a 0.5% chance the defined area will flood to an extent of the largest flood to occur in the past 200 years. It does not mean a 1-in-200-year level flood will occur only once every 200 years. A 1-in-200-year flood can occur at any time in any given year. In addition, the indicated flood level may be exceeded, and portions of the floodplain can flood more frequently.

Professional assistance and detailed engineering analysis may be required to address any of the above considerations.

How do I know if my property is in the floodplain?

Floodplain areas in the City of Terrace are designated in the Official Community Plan and described in **Section 4.0 of Zoning Bylaw No. 2069-2014**.

- Visit <https://www.terrace.ca/city-hall/bylaws>

The floodplain areas in Terrace can be viewed on **TerraMap**, the City of Terrace's online mapping site.

- Visit <https://www.terrace.ca/terramap>

The Province of BC has also made floodplain mapping available online.

- [Click here](#)

Can I build in the floodplain?

Yes, under certain conditions. The bylaw sets both a minimum setback from the natural boundary of rivers and creeks and minimum flood level.

When constructing a building within the designated floodplain areas, it must meet both the minimum flood setbacks and flood level. **See Section 4.0 of the Zoning Bylaw.**

As long as the buildings that are used for habitation, business, and storage of goods damageable by floodwaters are built above the minimum flood level and meet the minimum setbacks, construction can usually occur in the floodplain.

Can I get an exemption from the floodplain construction requirements?

Yes, in some circumstances. There are certain general exemptions, including additions to non-conforming buildings, carports, and garages; some agriculture building; and industrial uses. **See Section 4.5 of the Zoning Bylaw.**

Where the general exemptions do not apply, a property owner may seek a site specific exemption. A site specific exemption may provide an exemption from the minimum setbacks, flood levels, or both.

To obtain a site specific exemption, the property owner must apply to amend the zoning bylaw. As part of the application, they must provide a certified technical report prepared by a qualified professional that indicates how the property may be safely used for the intended use. See **Section 4.6 of the Zoning Bylaw** for details.

What should be included in a flood assessment report?

See **Guidelines for the Preparation of Flood Assessment Reports**, which can be obtained from the Development Services department.

HOW TO LEARN MORE

Learn more about how to use TerraMap:

- [Fact Sheet #DS-01 – TerraMap](#)