

# Hammond Area Plan

## Developing in the Floodplain



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### Provincial Legislation

Section 56 of the *Community Charter* requires that where land may be subject to flooding the building inspector may require certification by a qualified professional (engineer) that the land may be safely used for the use intended. As such, not only does the engineer evaluate the property, but they also provide a design of the building to ensure it will withstand flooding actions sufficiently to allow persons to evacuate from the building. The building department will also expect that – unless severe conditions occur – the building will be able to be re-used with relatively minor repairs most of which will hopefully be cosmetic.

Section 910 of the *Local Government Act* permits the designating of floodplains under municipal bylaw. Maple Ridge has not designated floodplain areas under bylaw, as the floodplain designation was determined by the Province in the 1960's and included requirements for new development within these areas .

Based on the above two pieces of Provincial legislation, the following is the minimum requirements for construction in this area:

- A covenant is registered on title identifying that construction is located within the floodplain. A report from a geotechnical engineer is required for attachment to the covenant that will outline what is required – at minimum to construct a foundation for a building in this area.
- For lots that were created after the original subdivision of lands in the 1800's, an additional limitation in the covenant is that no habitable floor space may be located below the flood construction level (FCL);
- A structural engineer is required to design the house to ensure the loads created will be adequately handled by the foundation and the supporting soils; and
- Requirements are in place to ensure new construction does not impact existing surface drainage flows to the detriment of the adjacent properties.

### City of Maple Ridge Zoning Bylaw

An additional limitation placed on land in the floodplain occurs within the Maple Ridge Zoning Bylaw under Section 402.8(h), that prohibits the installation of rental accommodations (suite) on a property situated in the floodplain.

### Definition of Flood Construction Level

The flood construction level is the level of flooding that could occur during a flood event. This elevation is determined based on the potential flood levels of the Fraser River. In 2008 a study was completed that found the flood level for the Fraser River in this area at 6.7 metres geodetic. This elevation includes what is called “freeboard”, which is the potential for elevated levels due to wave action on the river.



Photo at Right: Floodplain Construction in Maple Ridge