

The Flood Hazard Identification Program (FHIP) provides information to build resilient communities. By providing detailed information on design flood events, communities can take steps to reduce losses should an unfortunate natural flood event occur. For Alberta, a design flood event is defined as a flood event with a one per cent chance of occurring annually (this is also known as the 1:100 year flood event). FHIP provides a minimum standard for the province. Through bylaws, local governments can regulate land development to meet or exceed the standard set by the flood hazard identification program guidelines.

## Long Term Planning

Flood Hazard Studies are created to provide information for long term planning. The studies show what the future flooded areas would be if the flood hazard areas are developed appropriately. As a planning tool, a flood hazard study should provide quality information for many years.

## Guide Appropriate Development

Appropriate development requires years of consistently following basic development guidelines. The floodway must remain free of anything that would obstruct the river flow during a flood. Obstructions can be damaged during a flood event; could also make flood conditions worse in both the upstream and downstream river flows. The flood fringe can be developed as long as appropriate measures are taken to protect life and property. Development in the flood fringe can obstruct the flow without significantly increasing water levels upstream or downstream.

## Continuous Evaluation

While flood hazard studies are meant to be used for long periods of time, studies may be reviewed and possibly revised. A study review may involve the entire study area or simply a small portion of the mapped area. A review can be done for numerous reasons.

A major flood event is one reason to review flood hazard information studies. This is because each flood event provides an opportunity to collect new data that will either confirm the current study information or highlight areas for improvement. Should a major flood event occur, the province will collect information on the extent of flooding. This may include a survey of the flooded area from the ground, aerial photography, river flow information and other related data. It may take several months for all the data from a flood event to be collected before an evaluation of an existing study can begin.

Another reason for a study to be updated is the necessity of placing structures in a floodway. While it is best to keep the floodways free of obstructions, it is not always practical. For example, a large bridge may be needed for transportation. Bridges often require supporting piers to be located in the floodway. In this case, as part of the planning process for the new structure, the flood hazard study would be updated. In consultation with the local government, the impacts of the new structure would be discussed and, if necessary, the flood hazard information would be updated.

## Working Together

The provincial government works closely with local governments to share knowledge of flood hazards. There is ongoing information sharing between both provincial and local governments. After major flood events, the provincial government may share a role with the local government in providing information, understanding and context for the flood event in relationship to provincial programs.

