

Muskoka Official Plan Review



OPA 61 - HOW WE GOT HERE

JUNE 2024

Special Meeting of Community and Planning Services Committee:
MOP Review Workplan

FALL 2024

- Background reports for Component 1: Growth Strategy and Component 4: Lake System Health Policies
- Draft Component 2: Resort Development Policy

APRIL 2025

Open House and Public Meeting for Component 2: Resort Development Policy

JUNE 2025

Open House and Public Meeting for Component 1: Growth Strategy

JULY 2025

- Revised draft Component 2: Resort Development Policy
- Approved Component 1 for inclusion into OPA 61

FALL 2025

- Background report and draft Component 3: Environmental Resiliency and Draft Component 4: Lake System Health Policies
- Component 2 approved for inclusion into OPA 61

DECEMBER 2025

Public Information Centre and Open House Component 3 and Component 4

FEBRUARY 2026

- Approved Component 3 and 4 for inclusion into OPA 61
- Introduced and approved Component 3 and 4 for inclusion into OPA 61

MAY 2026

Open House and Public Meeting for OPA 61

JUNE 2026

Muskoka Official Plan Amendment 61 Component 3
Public Consultation Outcomes and Recommendations

Scan the QR code to find all material associated with the Five-Year Comprehensive Muskoka Official Plan Review





FLOODPLAIN MAPPING - HOW WE GOT HERE

A vertical timeline on a dark blue background with a white line and circular markers at the top and bottom. The timeline lists six key milestones from 2018 to June 2024. Each milestone is represented by a white rounded rectangle containing the date and a description of the event.

Date	Event
2018	Floodplain Mapping project initiated
FEB 2020	Phase 1 Floodplain Mapping Report
FALL 2022	Structural Flood Mitigation Options Report
DEC 2022	• Operational Adjustments and Scoping Study for the Muskoka River Water Management Plan Phase 1 Report • Flood Modifications Review Project
FALL 2023	• Development and Application of Flood Depth-Damage Curves for the Muskoka River Watershed • Phase 2 Floodplain Mapping Report • Phase 2 Floodplain Addendum Report
FEB 2024	Phase 3 Floodplain Mapping Report
JUNE 2024	OPA 61: Five Year Comprehensive Muskoka Official Plan Commenced

Scan the QR code to find all material associated with the Making Waves: Integrated Watershed Management



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WHAT IS FLOODPLAIN MAPPING?

Floodplain mapping shows areas that may be affected by flooding during major storm events. It helps identify where flooding may occur. The updated mapping provides information to support property owners, municipalities, and emergency planners in planning safely and making decisions about how development can proceed.

The District of Muskoka, through external Federal and Provincial funding, is fortunate to have state-of-the-art floodplain mapping, information and tools to identify local floodplains and better understand where flood hazards exist. This updated mapping utilizes:

- LiDar elevation data
- Bathymetry data
- LiDar elevation data
- Hydraulic Modelling
- Historical Flood Information
- Updated Climate and Watershed data

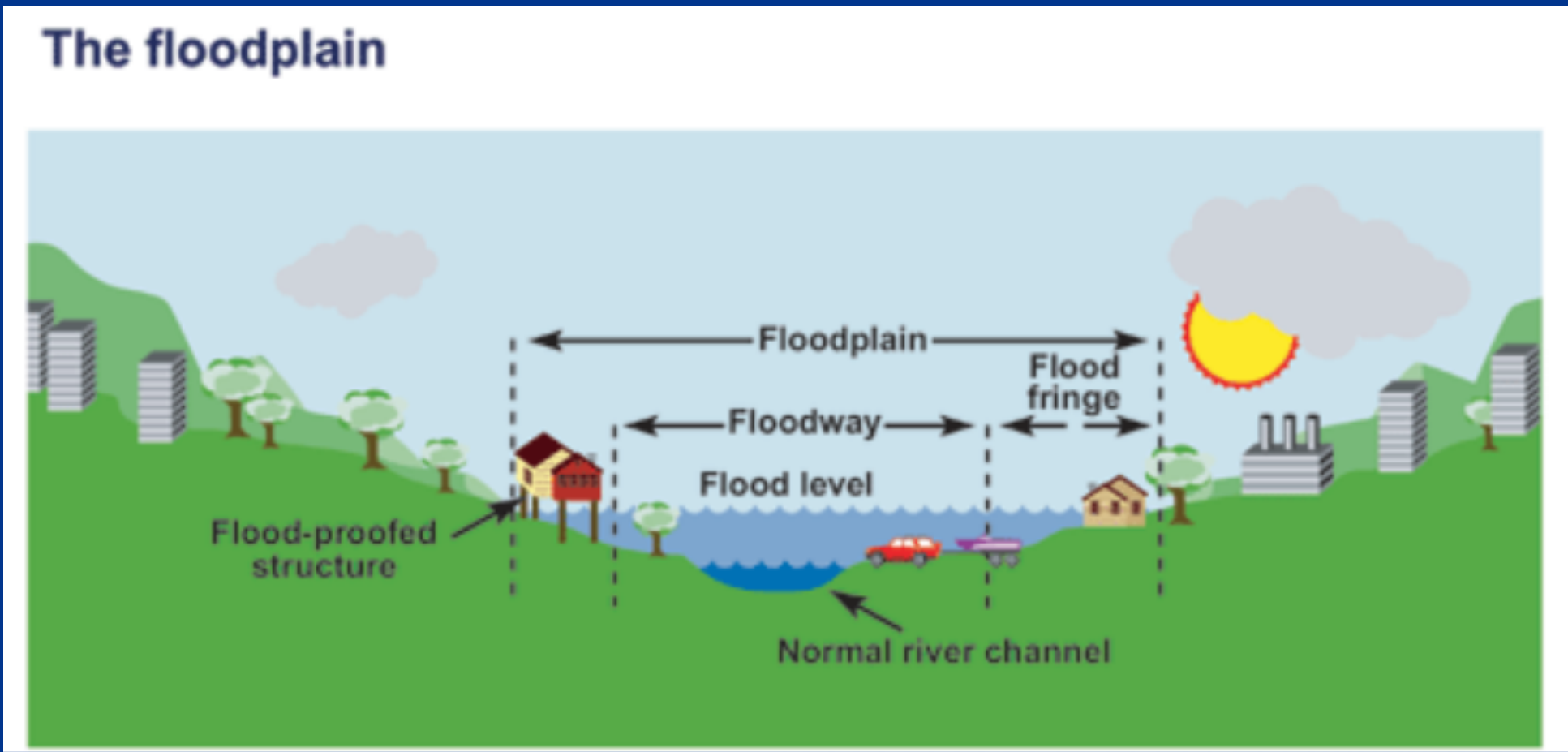
TERMS

WHAT IS A FLOOD ELEVATION?

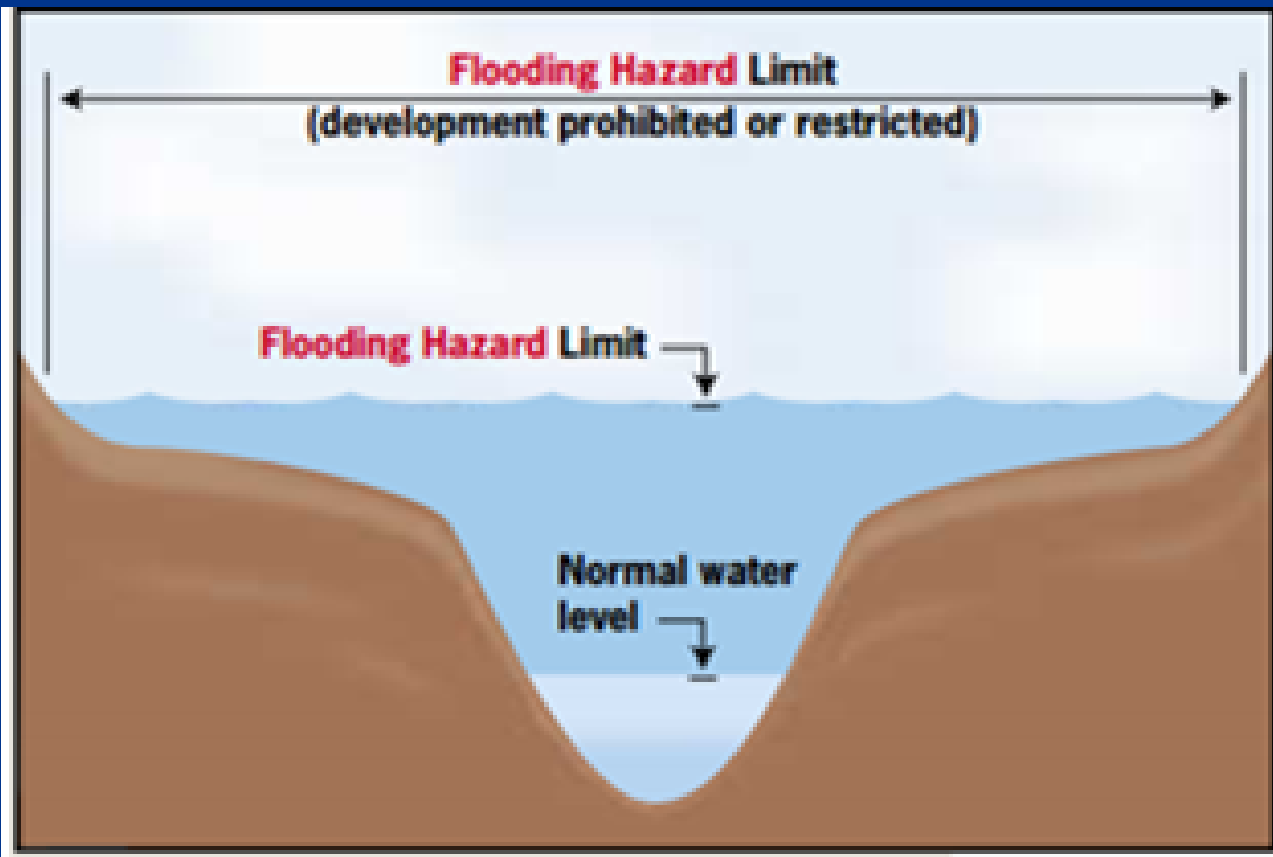
A flood elevation is the maximum height that water is expected to reach during a “worst-case” flood event.

WHAT IS A FLOODPLAIN?

A floodplain is an area of land that may be affected by flooding during major storm events. Floodplains are a natural part of Muskoka’s lakes, rivers, and watershed systems. They are areas that are next to lakes and rivers that temporarily store excess water during storms and spring freshets (also known as spring thaw or spring runoff).

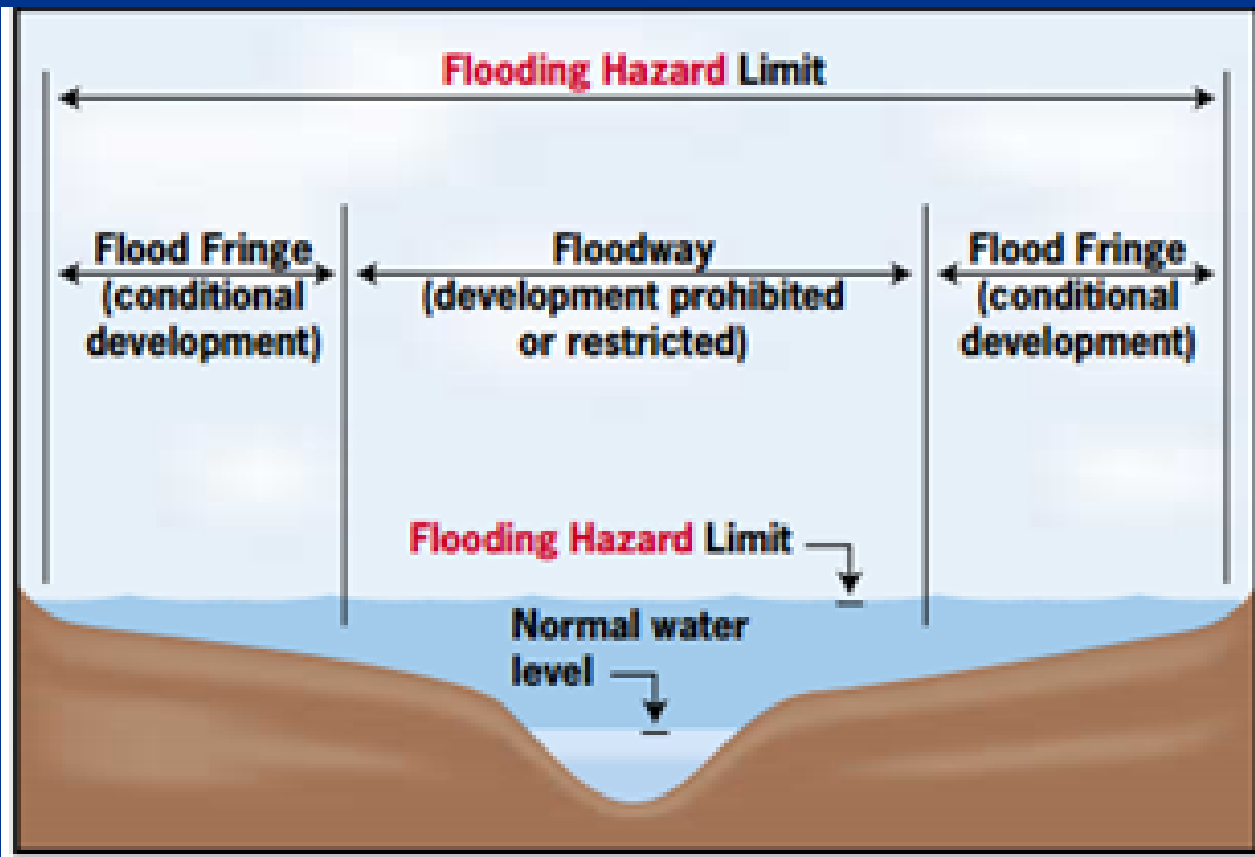


FLOOD HAZARD LIMIT: TWO ZONE VS ONE ZONE



One Zone (All lakes in Muskoka not inclusive of Lake Muskoka and Georgian Bay)

Flood Hazard Limit



Two Zone (All Rivers and tributaries in Muskoka)

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

PROVINCE

The Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) manages water flow in Muskoka through the Muskoka River Water Management Plan (MRWMP), established in 2006. The MRWMP explains how water levels are managed through a variety of water control structures, including dams and weirs (a smaller passive barrier that allows water to flow freely over the top or underneath them). The Province is solely responsible for reviews or updates to this Plan.

DISTRICT OF MUSKOKA

In the absence of a Conservation Authority, the District is responsible for:

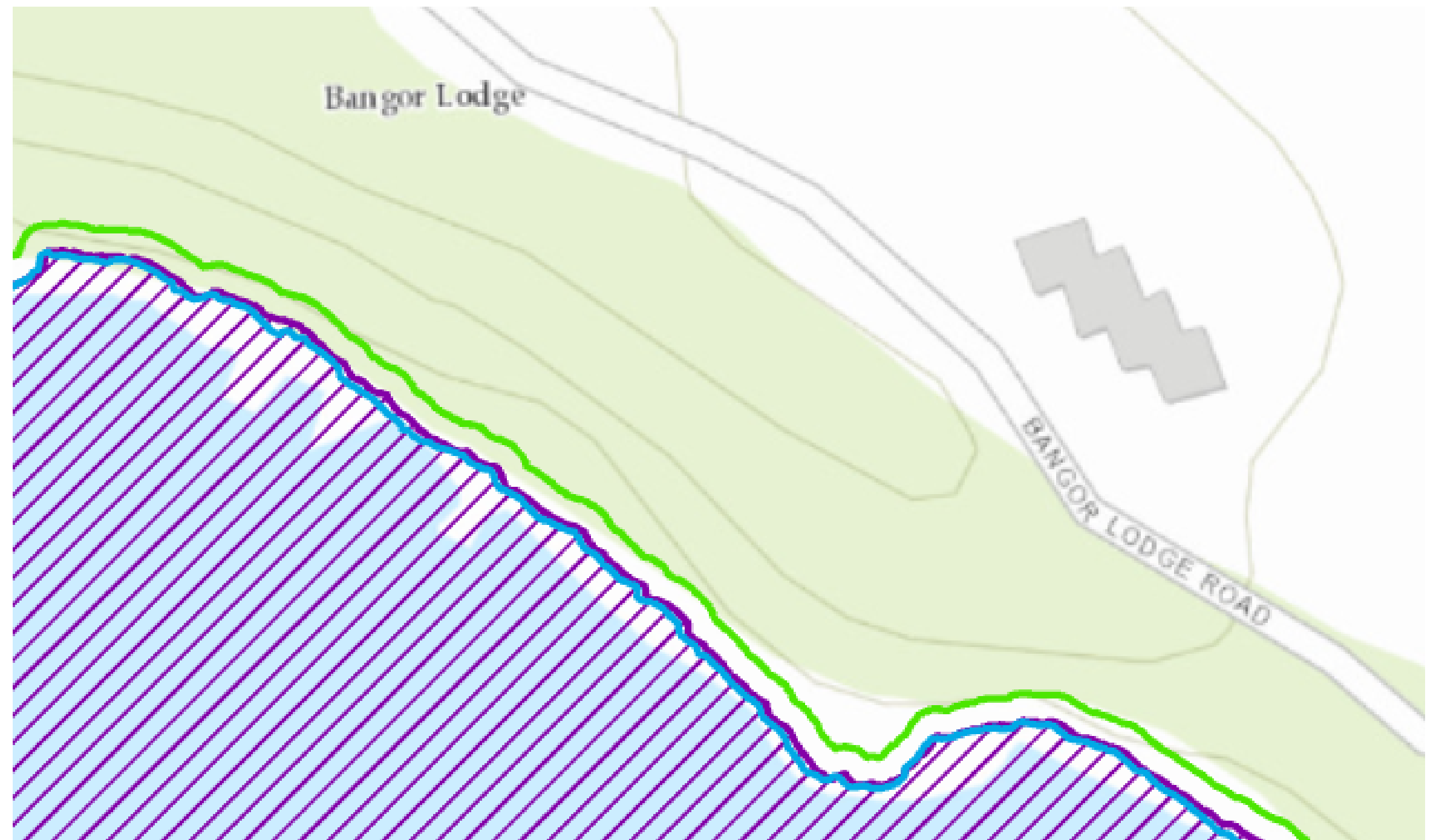
- Completing floodplain mapping
- Including flood hazard policies in the MOP
- Implementing Provincial planning direction related to flood hazards

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Comparison of Previous Lake Muskoka Regulatory Flood Elevation

- Blue Line- Town of Bracebridge previous RFE (226.49 MASL)
- Purple Line- District Floodplain Mapping Elevation (226.7 MASL)
- Green Line - 5 Metre horizontal allowance as required for Large Inland Lakes by the Province



Is the District raising the water levels in the lakes?

No. The flood elevation only estimates how high water may rise during a flood event. In some years, water levels may not reach this elevation. In other years, water levels may come closer to or go above it.

If I own a home or cottage in the floodplain, are you taking my property rights away from me?

No. Existing buildings can still be rebuilt, renovated, or slightly expanded, as long as they meet applicable requirements.

What if I want to apply to sever my property?

Floodplain mapping is only one factor considered when reviewing a severance application. Other factors include:

- Having enough space for a safe building area outside hazard areas
- Meeting minimum lot size and frontage requirements
- Protecting wetlands, rivers, streams, and steep slopes
- Ensuring access and services are available

If you have questions about a specific property, contact your local Planning Department.

I had a survey done for my property and it has different numbers than the floodplain mapping. Does that mean the mapping is wrong?

No. A property surveyor measures the exact elevations on your property and is accurate to plus or minus 2-5 cm. Floodplain mapping provides a general flood elevation used for planning decisions and is accurate to plus or minus 10-20 cm. Floodplain mapping is intended to provide an estimate of where water could reach during a flood. A site-specific survey provides more detailed information about where on your property it may be safe to build. Should your property fall partially within the floodplain mapping limits, a site-specific survey may be required by the Area Municipality.