



Land Development Requirements for Floodplain Properties

500-year Floodplain Requirements

- Currently, there are no land development requirements for properties in the 500-year floodplain.
- Because of the identified flood risk, voluntary flood insurance is recommended.
- The city of Boulder is drafting a critical facilities ordinance that may impact at risk populations, non-residential hazardous material applications, and large places of assembly in the 500-year floodplain.

100-year Floodplain Requirements

General requirements for new buildings or additions to buildings include:

- Providing openings in enclosed spaces (crawlspaces, garages, sheds) below the flood protection elevation (FPE) (two-feet above the elevation of the water surface of a 100-year flood) to equalize hydrostatic pressures. This means a minimum of two openings with a total of one square inch of opening for every square foot of enclosed area. This concept is called “wet floodproofing.”
- Elevate or floodproof mechanical and electrical systems to the FPE or locate systems above FPE.
- Utilities should be constructed to eliminate infiltration of floodwaters and discharge into floodwaters up to the FPE.
- Items in the floodplain should be properly anchored.
- Substantial improvements or substantial modifications generally require that the entire structure be brought into conformance with applicable regulations
- Parking cannot be established where flood waters exceed 18 inches.

Residential Structures:

- Elevate lowest floor level to FPE (two feet above 100-year flood elevation).
- No new basements in the floodplain.

Non-residential or Mixed-use structures:

- Elevate all residential units to FPE
- Elevate or floodproof non-residential portions of building to FPE

Conveyance Zone Requirements

- Development in the conveyance zone must meet the requirements of the 100-year floodplain and may not create any rise in the flood water elevations.

High Hazard Zone Requirements

- Properties in the high hazard zone (HHZ) must meet the requirements of the 100-year floodplain and conveyance zone if applicable.
- No new structures or additions intended for human occupancy are allowed in the HHZ.
- No new parking lots.
- No change of use of an existing non-residential structure to a residential use is permitted.
- Only non-substantial improvements to existing buildings are permitted.

For more information on land development requirements, please contact:

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