

Medicine Hat Flood Study

About our engagement

We know you might have questions about our public engagement and how your feedback fits into the flood study finalization process. This document provides answers to common questions about our engagement. We welcome you to read through all the questions and answers, or focus only on the specific questions you're most interested in learning more about as part of our public engagement.

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Questions and answers

What is the purpose of this public engagement?

The purpose of this engagement is to get technical feedback from the public on draft reports and flood maps from the new Medicine Hat flood study. Public engagement is part of our standard study finalization process.

Are we the only community being engaged about new flood studies?

No. Over the last year, we completed technical work on 21 flood studies that include more than 60 municipalities and First Nation communities. We completed public engagement on draft flood inundation maps for two studies earlier this year, and are moving through the same kind of public engagement for the remainder of the studies.

What is the flood study finalization process?

When technical work on a flood study is completed, draft reports and maps are provided to impacted local authorities, such as towns, cities, counties, municipal districts, and First Nations. Once a local authority completes its technical review and issues are addressed, public engagement proceeds. Draft reports and maps are then made available to the public, typically starting with foundational study components like flood inundation maps and followed by flood hazard maps at a later stage in the process.

Can I view the draft flood inundation maps without reading all the reports?

Yes. We understand that not everyone is interested in reading reports and may only want to see the draft flood maps. The provincial [Flood Awareness Map Application](#) is the best way to view, interact with, and get more information about draft flood maps.

What kind of feedback are you interested in receiving?

We are interested in your technical feedback on the draft reports and flood maps. We are particularly interested in feedback on the hydraulic modelling and flood mapping components of the draft study, as well as the flood inundation maps themselves. The draft reports and flood maps have gone through several stages of review already, but we welcome your feedback regarding factual errors or omissions.

How can I provide technical feedback?

Technical feedback can be provided via the online submission form on the Medicine Hat flood study engagement [website](#), the same place where all the draft reports and flood maps can also be found.

What if I'm not sure my concern is technical?

We will do our best to interpret any comments provide. You do not need to be an engineer or flood expert to provide feedback.

Can I give feedback about flood concerns that aren't related to the study?

Yes. Although our focus will be on assessing feedback directly related to the draft study, we will compile and carefully consider any feedback we receive.

How will you address my feedback and technical concerns?

We will carefully consider all submitted technical concerns. Due to the potential volume of submissions we likely will not be able to respond to your feedback directly. However, we will be providing future study update notices at www.floodhazard.alberta.ca, with more information about the study status and where we are in the finalization process.

Will the draft reports and flood maps change based on feedback?

They may change. We will carefully consider all feedback received, and will revise the draft reports and flood maps if required to address technical errors.

Where are the flood hazard maps that define the floodway?

The focus of this engagement is on the draft flood inundation maps. We are not in a position to share new flood hazard maps at this time, but are exploring future opportunities for local authority review and public engagement in the next stage of the draft flood study finalization process. We want to ensure that any foundational technical issues that come to light during review of the flood inundation maps and other technical reports are addressed, and the appropriate changes made if required. Our goal is to provide the accurate draft flood hazard maps.

When will new flood hazard maps be released?

We expect to share draft flood hazard maps next year. We are currently implementing some changes to the maps to better reflect the protection provided by flood berms, similar to how these areas are shown on our draft flood inundation maps, and to reduce the impact of any potential changes to previously-defined floodways that communities have been using for local decision-making. We expect to share draft flood hazard maps with local authorities in early 2021 for review, and then move to public engagement later in the year. Rest assured, there will be opportunities for the public to view the maps and provide technical feedback before finalization.

What happens after this stage of public engagement ends?

We will need time to compile and assess the comments we receive after the public feedback period ends, and assess whether any meaningful errors or omissions need to be addressed.

When will the flood study be finalized?

Flood studies are considered to be draft until formal finalization is completed. The finalization process includes staged local authority review and public engagement components. Our goal is to finalize the draft reports and flood maps currently being shared by the end of the year, but the full study and the flood hazard maps may be finalized at a later date pending the timing of that engagement and the feedback we receive from local authorities and the public.

Will these maps be reviewed or updated in the future?

Yes, but provincial flood maps are expected to have a relatively long useful lifespan and it's difficult to estimate when they will be reviewed or updated in the future. We typically review our hydraulic models and flood maps after major floods, to check that they remain reasonably representative. The likelihood of review or update increases if a significant flood was to occur and the mapping didn't provide a reasonable representation of what was experienced, or after community-level flood mitigation works like flood berms are constructed or upgraded.

Contact us

Email us at aep.flood@gov.ab.ca for more information about the public engagement process for the Medicine Hat flood study, or if you have questions about the Flood Hazard Identification Program.