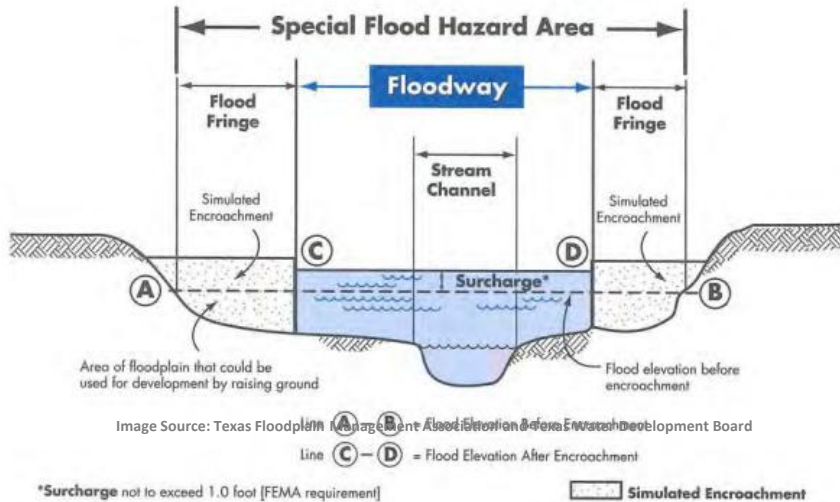


# What is floodplain encroachment?

A Guide to Projects in Special Flood Hazard Areas

# DRAFT

## THE FLOODPLAIN



A floodplain is an area that experiences surface flooding during storms. Floodplains often border streams or ponds but can also be isolated depressions susceptible to flooding. Floodplains are delineated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

Floodplains are determined using Base Flood Elevations (BFEs). The base flood is the national standard used by the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and all Federal agencies for the purposes of requiring the purchase of flood insurance and regulating new development. BFEs are typically shown on Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs).

## ENCROACHMENT AND COMPENSATORY STORAGE

Encroachments are activities or construction within the floodplain including fill, new construction, substantial improvements, and other development. Common encroachments in Arlington include additions, walls, and decks or porches.

If a project proposes encroachment into the floodplain, then the project has to compensate for the encroachment by building compensatory flood storage onsite. In Arlington, compensatory flood storage must be built at a ratio of 2:1 of the encroachment. For example, if a project encroaches 1 cubic foot into the floodplain, the project must build 2 cubic feet of compensatory flood storage. Compensatory flood storage can be built through re-grading the project site or other methods.

