



THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF VERNON
3400 – 30 Street
Vernon, BC
V1T 5E6

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: February 28, 2022

MEDIA CONTACT: Christy Poirier, Manager, Communications & Grants

TELEPHONE: 250-550-3539

Flood mapping study to help Vernon become a flood resilient community

A new flood mapping study has been completed to help Vernon become a flood resilient community. Residents are now invited to tour a new online interactive “Flood Story” to learn about the study and what it means for Vernon’s future.

The Detailed Flood Mapping, Risk Analysis and Mitigation Study focused on the risks and potential impacts to the Vernon community if significant flooding were to occur on Vernon Creek or BX Creek. It also offers recommendations to help residents and the City of Vernon prepare for future flood events and mitigate negative impacts to the community.

This work followed a similar flood mapping project that was conducted for Okanagan Lake by the [Okanagan Basin Water Board](#).

“Living in Vernon means living with the natural movement and flow of water as it travels through a vast system of streams, creeks, lakes and other water courses in the North Okanagan and into the rest of the Okanagan Valley,” said Mayor Victor Cumming. “Flooding is a natural occurrence and can happen any time across BC. There are environmental benefits that come from flooding, but also some community-based risks.

“We know Vernon has faced floods, and will face flood events in the future. What we don’t know is how much water will be involved,” he continued. “So now is the time to understand our areas of risk, the state of our current infrastructure, what we can do to prepare ourselves as a City and as community members, plus what steps we can take to mitigate potential impacts from rising water levels.”

The study used a 1-in-200 year flood event to model water levels along Vernon Creek, and a flood record from 1996 to model water levels along BX Creek (which was larger than the 1-in-200 year event). Both models were adjusted for future climate change.

To help residents learn about the flood mapping study and what it means for our community, the City of Vernon has developed an interactive, virtual [Flood Story](#). This online resource offers detailed information on the identified floodplain, describes potential impacts to the community, and recommends a number of mitigation measures that can be put in place by the City, residents, and property owners within the floodplain.

It also recommends a series of flood-mitigation projects the City can undertake, related to emergency response planning, land use and development bylaws, and infrastructure upgrades. Council has endorsed the recommendations from the study and directed Administration to begin working on them. Some of the projects can begin right away, while others will require more detailed feasibility studies to be done in order to appropriately plan next steps.

“The flood-mitigation projects that will be done by the City will take time to complete,” said Mayor Cumming. “This work certainly won’t happen overnight. However, as plans are developed, projects are completed, and more work is done to further understand ongoing changes to our environment, climate, and community, Vernon will be much better prepared to face and withstand the impacts of flooding. We can become flood resilient.”

Residents are invited to explore Vernon’s Flood Story by visiting www.vernon.ca/floodstory. A list of frequently asked questions have also been prepared and are available at the same link.