

## Step by Step Development Process

- 1 Prior to any development or alteration of land on your property, speak with planning staff to determine whether your property may be affected by natural hazard areas.
- 2 Depending on the location of the proposed development or alteration of land, a site-level assessment by a qualified professional may be recommended.
- 3 For lands affected by a Natural Hazard Development Permit Area (DPA), an application for a development permit may be required.
- 4 A security deposit may be required as part of the development permit if the proposed development or alteration of land requires landscaping.
- 5 Development permit applications are submitted to the Planning Department, considered by the Planning Committee, and then forwarded to the Regional Board for consideration.
- 6 Once the Regional Board makes a decision regarding the development permit, the applicant will be notified, and the development permit is registered on the property title.

### For more information please contact us!

#202-4675 Marine Ave Powell River, BC  
604 485-2260 | [planning@qathet.ca](mailto:planning@qathet.ca)  
[qathet.ca](http://qathet.ca)



**qathet**  
REGIONAL DISTRICT

Developing properties where there are...

# Natural Hazard Areas



**qathet**  
REGIONAL DISTRICT

## What are Natural Hazard Areas?

Natural hazard areas are lands that may be environmentally sensitive to development. Hazard lands can include steep-slope areas subject to rock fall or landslide, and low-lying coastal areas and floodplains subject to flooding.

Prior to any new development or alteration of land in natural hazard areas, it is recommended that a site-level assessment by a qualified professional be completed to ensure safe building sites and safe development practices are selected.

To learn whether your property is affected by a natural hazard area, contact the Planning Department at 604 485-2260 or [planning@qathet.ca](mailto:planning@qathet.ca)

## What is an Official Community Plan?

An Official Community Plan (OCP) sets out the vision, goals and overarching policies guiding land use and development in the area covered by the plan. The Regional Board, staff, and property owners use the OCP to help guide decisions on where to locate new development and where to provide regional and electoral area services.

Environmentally sensitive areas such as natural hazard areas and riparian areas are identified in the OCP. Specific development policies and guidelines apply to all new development within these areas.



# Good Design Practices

## DRAINAGE & STORM WATER

*A site-level assessment by a qualified professional can identify any specific drainage and storm water issues on your property and recommend storm water management practices to mitigate risk of erosion or flooding.*

**Conserve natural vegetation** and tree cover, especially on steep slopes. Trees and vegetation play an important role in absorbing water and stabilizing soils on slopes.

**Limit impervious areas** for new buildings such as garages, sheds, and other hard surfaces like paved driveways.

**Use alternatives to impervious surfaces**, such as gravel driveways, paving stones, permeable pavers, etc.

**Use rain barrels.**

**Direct roof downspouts to splash pads** to disperse rainwater over lawns or other pervious surfaces.

**Use absorbent topsoil** (i.e. topsoil amended with compost to improve its absorption and attenuation characteristics).

**Construct landscaping features** with rainwater management functions, such as rain gardens or bio-swales.

### Install, maintain, and upgrade drainage infrastructure

such as driveway culverts and ditches on your property (driveway culverts should be minimum 400 mm in diameter).

**Stay informed** on the best practices for managing runoff from your property and in your community, and how this effects downstream residents and infrastructure.

## SLOPE HAZARD AREAS

*A site-level assessment by a qualified professional can identify any specific slope hazard issues on your property and recommend safe building sites and development practices to mitigate risk of landslide or rock fall.*

**Establish safe setbacks** from the top of a steep bank or cliff, especially those with a slope height  $\geq 3$  metres and a slope gradient  $\geq 35\%$ .

**Establish safe setbacks** from the toe or bottom of a slope at the point where the ground surface abruptly changes to a significantly flatter grade.

**Conserve natural vegetation** and tree cover, especially on steep slopes. Trees and vegetation play an important role in stabilizing soils on slopes.

**Prune trees up instead of removing them** to enhance views.

**Practice good rainwater management.**

**Stay informed** on the best practices for managing slopes on your property and in your community, and how this effects downslope and neighbouring residents and infrastructure.

# Natural Hazard Areas in our Region

Our wet, coastal climate, and sloping terrain add to an increased potential for natural hazard events. Most events are triggered after an extended period of heavy rain when the ground is extremely wet. Landslide and flooding events may be caused by a combination of factors like weak earth materials, poor drainage, saturated soils, over-bank flow, and altered landscape and vegetation.

## FLOODPLAINS & COASTAL AREAS

*A site-level assessment by a qualified professional can identify any specific flood hazard issues on your property and recommend safe building sites and development practices to mitigate risk of erosion or flooding.*

**Establish safe setbacks** from the sea, and from rivers, creeks, and streams.

**Establish safe flood construction levels** for building.

**Conserve natural vegetation** and tree cover within setback areas. Trees and vegetation play an important role in absorbing water and stabilizing soils.

**Prune trees up instead of removing** to enhance views.

**Stay informed** on the best practices for managing flood prone areas on your property and in your community, and how this effects neighbouring residents and infrastructure.

