

**What is a Substantial Improvement?**

Chapter 19 states “substantial improvement” shall mean any reconstruction, rehabilitation, addition or other improvement of a structure, the cost of which equals or exceeds 50% of the market value of the structure, before the start of the construction of the improvement in the delineated 100 year floodplain and floodway.

**Why is it important to know if the improvement is “substantial”?**

Per Chapter 19, substantial improvements will require the ENTIRE structure to be brought into compliance with Chapter 19 regulations, not just the proposed improvement.

**Can I still get a development permit for a Substantial Improvement?**

Yes, as stated above, the ENTIRE structure will have to be brought into compliance with Chapter 19 regulations.

**Does it matter if the property is in the floodway or 100 year floodplain?**

No. Substantial improvement determines whether the ENTIRE structure must be brought into compliance with the Chapter 19 requirements for floodplain or floodway.

**Can cumulative improvements to my structure qualify as a substantial improvement?**

No. With the revisions to Chapter 19, cumulative improvements to structures do not trigger substantial improvements.

**Who determines the market value of my structure?**

The market value of the structure may be documented by the respective County Appraisal Districts, the FEMA Residential Substantial Damage Estimator (RSDE), a TALCB certified real estate appraiser or other methods approved by the City Engineer.

**For fees and more information**, contact the City of Houston Floodplain Management Office (FMO) at (832) 394-8854, visit FMO at 1002 Washington Avenue or at [www.floodplain.houstontx.gov](http://www.floodplain.houstontx.gov).