

Council Policy C006-11

Agricultural Areas Policy

Part 1 - General

Division 1 - General

Policy Statement

- 1 The City will facilitate and thoughtfully evaluate Agricultural Land Commission applications and proposals involving site-specific Council approvals to support unique agricultural land use needs in farming areas.

Purposes of this Policy

- 2 To establish principles and guidelines that will guide City staff review and recommendations regarding proposals for:
 - (a) large Single Detached Dwellings in the ALR (over 500 m²);
 - (b) Full-Time Farm Worker Residences;
 - (c) Temporary Farm Worker Housing; and
 - (d) Farm Product Processing proposals that exceed the size limit of the Zoning Bylaw.

Application

- 3 This policy applies to the following:
 - (a) Agricultural Land Commission Non-Adhering Residential Use applications for:
 - (i) single detached dwellings exceeding the 500 m² size limit of *Agricultural Land Commission Act* section 20.1;
 - (ii) Full Time Farm Worker Residences;
 - (iii) Temporary Farm Worker Housing; and
 - (b) Site specific Zoning Bylaw approval requests for:
 - (i) Farm Product Processing - Level 2;
 - (ii) Farm Product Processing - Intensive;
 - (iii) Temporary Farm Worker Housing proposals exceeding Zoning Bylaw maximums for:
 - (1) the number of Temporary Farm Worker Housing Spaces;
 - (2) permitted floor area in relation to lot size; and
 - (iv) Temporary Farm Worker Housing proposals that propose new permanent buildings.

Division 2 - Interpretation

Definitions

4 In this policy:

“**Farm Operation**” has the same meaning as in the Zoning Bylaw, 2014.

“**Farm Product Processing - Level 2**” has the same meaning as in the Zoning Bylaw, 2014.

“**Farm Product Processing - Intensive**” has the same meaning as in the Zoning Bylaw, 2014.

“**Full Time Farm Worker Residence**” has the same meaning as in the Zoning Bylaw, 2014.

“**Non-Adhering Residential Use**” has the same meaning as in the *Agricultural Land Commission Act*.

“**Single Detached Dwelling**” has the same meaning as in the Zoning Bylaw, 2014.

“**Temporary Farm Worker Housing**” has the same meaning as in the Zoning Bylaw, 2014.

“**Temporary Farm Worker Housing Space**” has the same meaning as in the Zoning Bylaw, 2014.

Part 2 - Guidelines for Consideration of Applications

Division 1 - ALC Non-Adhering Residential Use: Large Single Detached Dwellings

Principles and Considerations

- 5 Without limiting Council’s discretion in respect of any Agricultural Land Commission application, the principles and guidelines set out in this Division will generally inform City staff review and recommendations regarding Agricultural Land Commission Non-Adhering Residential Use applications for Single Detached Dwellings exceeding the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* 500 m² floor area maximum.
- 6 Application review may consider:
 - (a) extent of proposal compliance with Zoning Bylaw, 2014;
 - (b) whether the principal residence will be the only residence on the property at time of occupancy, excluding secondary suites;
 - (c) whether the lot is 4.0 ha in area or larger;
 - (d) the extent of farmable area on the lot that is not encumbered by environmental constraints or natural areas that impede agriculture;
 - (e) whether a high proportion of the lot is being actively farmed and if the farmed commodity typically demands a high labour need;
 - (f) if the lot has been assessed as ‘farm’ under the *Assessment Act* for the last 3 years; and
 - (g) other unique circumstances relevant to the application.
- 7 Proposals are not required to meet all factors in (6).

Division 2 - ALC Non-Adhering Residential Use: Full-Time Farm Worker Residences

Principles and Considerations

- 8 Without limiting Council's discretion in respect of any Agricultural Land Commission application, the guidelines in this Division will generally inform City staff review and recommendations regarding Agricultural Land Commission Non-Adhering Residential Use applications for Full-Time Farm Worker Residences.
- 9 Application review may consider the following minimum Farm Operation thresholds as an indicator of farm need for a Full-Time Farm Worker Residence:

Farm Type		Minimum Level of Operation
Beef	(a) cow-calf, or cattle grazing	200 at one time
	(b) beef Feedlot	500 at one time
	(c) veal	100 at one time
Berries, including Cranberries	(a) Minimum Farm Operation of 16 ha owned by the farmer and planted in berries. Of this 16 ha Farm Operation, at least one lot must be a at least 8 ha in size and upon which is located a permanent dwelling unit.	
Dairy		60 milking or dry
Fruit or Nut Orchards	(a) 800-1200 trees per 0.4 ha	6 ha
	(b) 250-350 trees per 0.4 ha	14 ha
Goats		300-400 milking
Greenhouses	(a) vegetables, berries, ornamentals	8,000 m ²
Horses	(a) breeding	2 breeding mares and/or 1 stallion
	(b) other than breeding or combined operations	10 horses
Mushrooms		900 m ² of bed area
Nurseries	(a) propagating house	1,860 m ²
	(b) container stock	2 ha
	(c) field growing nursery	8 ha
Poultry	(a) chicken broiler	56,000 birds per 8 week cycle, to equal 364,000 broilers per year
	(a) chicken broiler breeder	12,000 birds per year
	(b) chicken layer, conventional	i. minimum 20,000 laying birds at one time; or ii. minimum 40,000 pullets raised per year; or iii. a proportional combination
	(c) chicken layer, free run	i. minimum 10,000 laying birds at one time; or ii. minimum 20,000 pullets raised per year; or iii. a proportional combination

Poultry	(d) chicken layer, free range	i. minimum 5,000 laying birds at one time; or ii. minimum 10,000 pullets raised per year; or iii. a proportional combination
	(e) heavy turkey	40,000 birds per year
	(f) broiler turkey	80,000 birds per year
Vegetables	(g) field grown potatoes	20 ha in production
	(h) other field vegetables	16 ha in production
Sheep		150 ewes and 5 rams
Swine	(i) farrow to wean	210 sows at one time
	(j) farrow to finish	150 sows at one time
	(k) finishing	5,000 hogs at one time

- 10** Council may consider proposals that do not meet the minimum level of Farm Operation thresholds set-out in (9).
- 11** A restrictive covenant may be required on the title of all lots used to meet the Farm Operation thresholds set out in (9) or referenced in an Agricultural Land Commission approval, prohibiting any further Full-Time Farm Worker Residences on those lots.

Division 3 - ALC Non-Adhering Residential Use: Temporary Farm Worker Housing

Principles and Considerations

- 12** Without limiting Council's discretion in respect of any Agricultural Land Commission application, the guidelines in this Division will generally inform City staff review and recommendations regarding Agricultural Land Commission Non-Adhering Residential Use applications for Temporary Farm Worker Housing.
- 13** Application review may consider:
- (a) the extent of proposal compliance with Zoning Bylaw, 2014;
 - (b) the extent to which the proposal responds to factors such as productive farmland and the interface with adjacent properties;
 - (c) whether the demand for the proposed Temporary Farm Worker Housing is driven by farming activities within the City of Abbotsford; and
 - (d) the extent to which the applicant owns the land driving the demand for the proposed housing.
- 14** Where an ALC application justifies the farm need for Temporary Farm Worker Housing with more than one lot, a restrictive covenant may be required on the title of all identified lots, prohibiting any further Temporary Farm Worker Housing on those lots.

Division 4 - Zoning Bylaw Related Approvals for Temporary Farm Worker Housing

Principles and Considerations

- 15** Without limiting Council's discretion in respect of any development application, the principles and considerations set out in this Division will generally inform City staff review and recommendations regarding site-specific Zoning Bylaw approval requests for Temporary Farm Worker Housing applications that:
- (a) exceed the Temporary Farm Worker Housing Space maximums; or
 - (b) exceed the maximum permitted floor area in relation to lot size; or
 - (c) request construction of new permanent buildings for such use.
- 16** Application review may consider:
- (a) Farm Operation details driving the demand or need for permanent or higher capacity housing facilities;
 - (b) if the farm has been in operation for at least 5 years;
 - (c) the proportion of required employees that will be working on the same lot as the proposed housing;
 - (d) the demand for workers driven by other lots of the Farm Operation that could potentially be removed from the Farm Operation through property sale or lease termination;
 - (e) the availability of other housing options to support the farm need;
 - (f) the extent of other residential uses on the lot and on the other lots that make up the Farm Operation;
 - (g) compatibility of the proposal with adjacent properties and proposed buffering or mitigation measures;
 - (h) infrastructure and servicing demands and capacity; and
 - (i) the impact of the proposed development footprint and siting on productive farmland.

Division 5 - Farm Product Processing Facilities

Principles and Considerations

- 17** Without limiting Council's discretion in respect of any rezoning application, the principles and guidelines set out in this Division will generally inform City staff review and recommendations regarding rezoning applications for:
- (a) Farm Product Processing - Level 2; and
 - (b) Farm Product Processing - Intensive.
- 18** Application review may consider:
- (a) the ability of existing transportation infrastructure, and mitigation measures proposed by the applicant, to adequately support the traffic generated by the use and minimize local impacts;
 - (b) the availability and suitability of an adequate water supply for the proposed use and intensity;
 - (c) proposed approaches for managing wastewater on-site, or through connections within the Municipal Service Area;

- (d) the extent to which the proposal is compatible with surrounding uses and existing servicing infrastructure, incorporating mitigation measures as appropriate;
- (e) whether associated outdoor storage exceeds 2,500 m²;
- (f) demonstrated ability to comply with Provincial Ministry and ALC Regulations (i.e., 50% farm product rules)

Additional Information May Be Requested

19 In addition to typical rezoning application requirements, the City may request the following information to support proposal review:

- (a) stormwater management plan, including on-site detention, infiltration, and run-off treatment;
- (b) wastewater management plan, addressing solid, liquid, and odour components; Terms of Reference shall be reviewed and approved by the applicant's engineer, the City, and Provincial Ministries, as appropriate;
- (c) water servicing/supply plan;
- (d) traffic impact assessment;
- (e) fire protection plan; and
- (f) other studies or plans, as deemed necessary.

Division 6 - Related procedures, guidelines, and publications

20 The following documents relate to this policy:

- (a) Official Community Plan Bylaw, 2016
- (b) Zoning Bylaw, 2014
- (c) *Agricultural Land Commission Act* and its Regulations

ADOPTED August 29, 2022