



# City of Richmond

## Report to Committee

**To:** Planning Committee  
**From:** John Hopkins  
Director, Policy Planning

**Date:** May 10, 2022  
**File:** 08-4050-10/2022-Vol  
01

**Re:** Farming First Strategy – One-Year Review

### Staff Recommendation

That the staff report titled “Farming First Strategy – One-Year Review” dated May 10, 2022 from the Director, Policy Planning, be received for information.

John Hopkins  
Director, Policy Planning  
(604-276-4279)

Att. 2

REPORT CONCURRENCE		
ROUTED TO:	CONCURRENCE	CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER
Economic Development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Engineering	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Sustainability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Community Bylaws	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Development Applications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
<b>SENIOR STAFF REPORT REVIEW</b>	INITIALS: 	APPROVED BY CAO 

## Staff Report

### Origin

On April 19, 2021, Council adopted the Farming First Strategy (Attachment 1) and associated Official Community Plan bylaw amendments (Amendment Bylaws 10230, 10231 & 10232). This report responds to the following referral associated with the adoption of the Farming First Strategy:

*That staff be directed to report back to Council in one year regarding the implementation of the proposed actions associated with the Farming First Strategy.*

This report supports Council's Strategic Plan 2018-2022 Strategy #2 A Sustainable and Environmentally Conscious City:

*2.3 Increase emphasis on local food systems, urban agriculture and organic farming.*

This report supports Council's Strategic Plan 2018-2022 Strategy #6 Strategic and Well-Planned Growth:

*6.1 Ensure an effective OCP and ensure development aligns with it.*

This report supports Council's Strategic Plan 2018-2022 Strategy #7 A Supported Economic Sector:

*7.4 Inspire the farming and fishing cultures of tomorrow.*

This report supports Council's Strategic Plan 2018-2022 Strategy #8 An Engaged and Informed Community:

*8.2 Ensure citizens are well-informed with timely, accurate and easily accessible communication using a variety of methods and tools.*

### Background

At the Public Hearing on April 19, 2021, Council adopted the Farming First Strategy (Attachment 1), a long-range strategy that includes policies related to protecting agricultural land for farming, strengthening the economic viability of food production, improving irrigation and drainage infrastructure, mitigating the impacts of climate change, and continuing to work collaboratively with upper levels of government to ensure local agricultural production is supported. The Farming First Strategy is a result of a multi-phase process, which included consultation with the farming community, the City's Food Security and Agricultural Advisory Committee (FSAAC) and Richmond residents.

The Farming First Strategy includes 43 policies focused around the following five major themes:

- Theme 1: Agricultural Land Base (2 objectives and 12 supporting policies);
- Theme 2: Agricultural Economic Viability (2 objectives and 11 supporting policies);
- Theme 3: Infrastructure for Agriculture (2 objectives and 9 supporting policies);

- Theme 4: Agriculture and the Environment (2 objectives and 7 supporting policies); and
- Theme 5: Inter-Governmental Support for Agriculture (2 objectives and 4 supporting policies).

The staff report associated with the adoption of the Farming First Strategy also included 19 actions based on the themes and objectives contained in the Strategy and recommended to report back to Council in one year regarding the implementation of the actions. The purpose of this report is to provide Council with an update on the status of the actions associated with the Farming First Strategy

### **Analysis**

The Farming First Strategy, and associated action items, have been effective at protecting land in the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) for farming, encouraging local food production and consumption, supporting farm access and infrastructure improvements, raising awareness of sustainable farm practices, and strengthening communication with upper levels of government to enhance local agricultural viability. The implementation of the Farming First Strategy action items requires coordination across a number of City departments. In coordination with the various departments at the City, a progress update for each Farming First Strategy action is provided in Attachment 2, including the following highlights:

- No loss of ALR land since the adoption of the Strategy.
- Updated statistics on the state of agriculture in the City will be provided as part of the release of the 2021 Census of Agriculture and Agricultural Land Use Inventory (ALUI) for Metro Vancouver. Staff will update Council once this information becomes available.
- Continued protection of soil-based farming by regulating the construction of concrete slabs and other impermeable floor surfaces for greenhouses and agricultural buildings/structures on properties zoned “Agriculture (AG1)”.
- Adoption by Council of the City’s Soil Deposit and Removal Bylaw No. 10200, which modernized and strengthened regulations that relate to soil deposition and removal within the City.
- Continued to meet with the Food Security and Agricultural Advisory Committee (FSAAC) to advise Council on issues related to food security and agriculture.
- Updated information on the City’s website regarding the requirements for development in the ALR. (e.g., building permit requirements for agricultural buildings)
- Integration of urban agriculture into development projects through the development application process (e.g., rooftop urban agriculture demonstration project for the Polygon Talisman project).
- Development of the Richmond Local Food Map, in coordination with Tourism Richmond, highlighting local food producers.
- Implementation of a formal process to respond to requests for farm access through unopened road allowances.
- Continued improvement of irrigation and drainage infrastructure throughout the ALR.

- Information sharing regarding sustainable farm practices and reducing emissions associated with farm operations.
- Coordination between the Ministry of Agriculture and the ALC on major policy initiatives and development proposals in the ALR; and
- Delivered a letter to the Ministry of Agriculture, Richmond MPs and Richmond MLAs regarding the Farming First Strategy and the agricultural-related issues that require upper-level government support.

The complete list of Farming First Strategy actions and status of each action is provided in Attachment 2. Based on staff's review, no amendments to the agricultural policies contained in the Farming First Strategy and Official Community Plan are proposed at this time.

### **Financial Impact**

None.

### **Conclusion**

The Farming First Strategy, adopted by Council on April 19, 2021, has been effective in guiding decisions on the land use management of agricultural land, enhancing public awareness of agriculture and food security issues, and strengthening agricultural viability in Richmond. Staff will continue to monitor and assess the effectiveness of the agricultural policies contained in the Farming First Strategy and the Official Community Plan, and bring forward any future proposed changes to Council for consideration.



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SDS:cas

- Att. 1: Farming First Strategy  
2: Analysis of Farming First Strategy Actions





CITY OF RICHMOND  
**FARMING FIRST  
STRATEGY**





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## Summary

Agriculture is an important part of Richmond's history and current economy. Early settlers were attracted to Richmond by the fertile soils of Lulu and Sea Islands and promise of agricultural productivity. Over the years, Richmond has grown and evolved into a vibrant urban centre, while retaining a significant portion of Richmond's land area as agricultural. Today, agriculture forms an important part of the local and regional economy as well as a major land use in the city. Approximately 4,993 ha (12,338 ac) of Richmond's land base, or 39% of the City, is within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR).

Council directed staff to update the 2003 Agricultural Viability Strategy (AVS) to ensure that it remains effective, and responds well to the current and future issues, trends and challenges facing the agricultural industry.

The City of Richmond Farming First Strategy includes themes, objectives and policies to guide decisions on the land use management of agricultural land, enhance public awareness of agriculture and food security issues, and strengthen agricultural viability in Richmond. The Farming First Strategy is focused around the following five major themes:



**THEME 1**  
Agricultural  
Land Base



**THEME 2**  
Agricultural  
Economic  
Viability



**THEME 3**  
Infrastructure for  
Agriculture



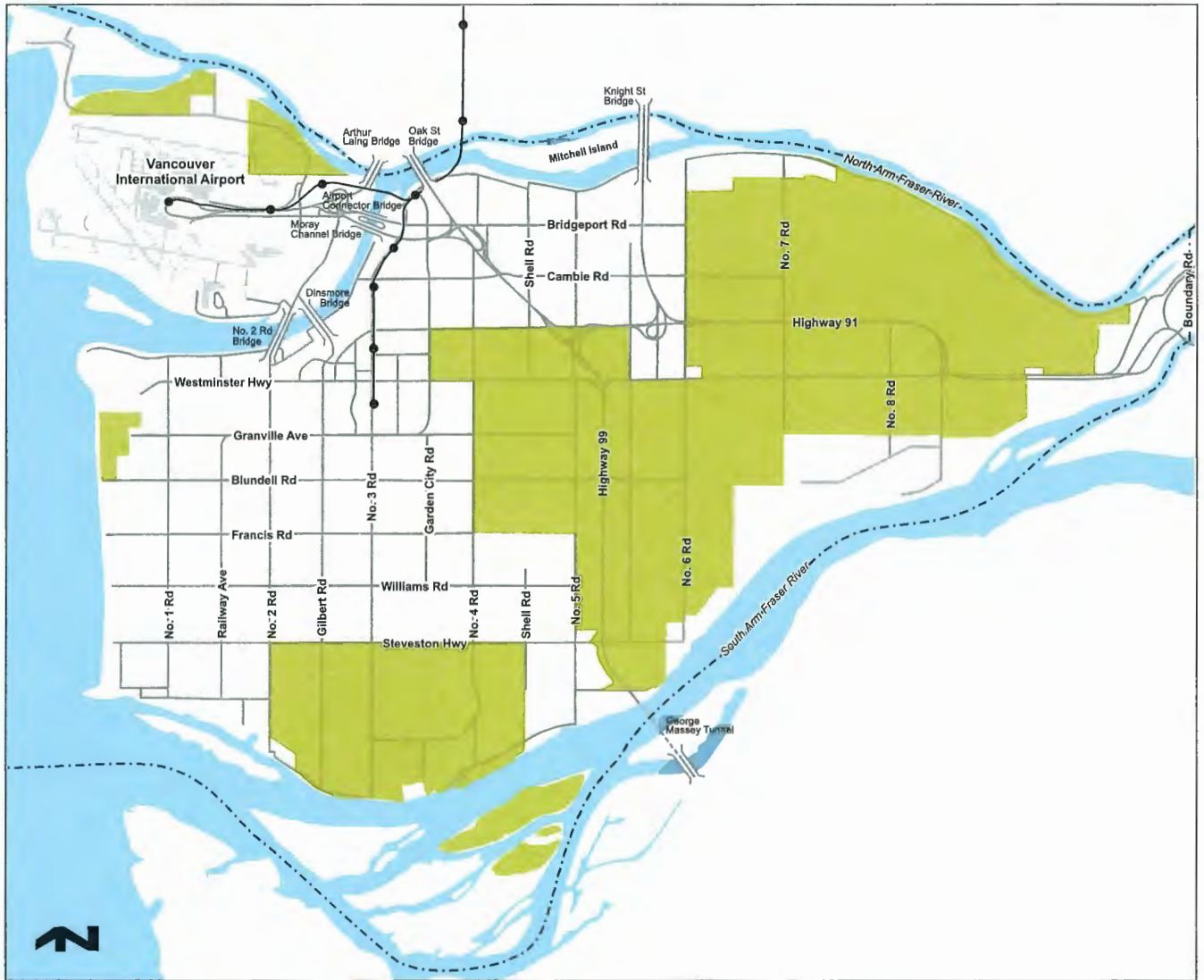
**THEME 4**  
Agriculture  
and the  
Environment



**THEME 5**  
Inter-  
Governmental  
Support for  
Agriculture

The themes, objectives and policies contained in the Farming First Strategy is a result of a multi-phase process, which included a review of existing policies and practices in Richmond, best practice research from other jurisdictions, and input from the City's Food Security and Agricultural Advisory Committee (FSAAC) and Richmond residents.

# ALR in Richmond



- Canada Line
- Agricultural Land Reserve





Photo Credit: Wade Comer Photography

## Theme 1: Agricultural Land Base

### Objective 1: Continue to protect the City's agricultural land base in the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR).

- a. Maintain the existing ALR boundary and do not support a loss of ALR land.
- b. Ensure that land uses adjacent to, but outside of, the ALR are compatible with farming by establishing effective agricultural buffers on the non-agricultural lands.
- c. Designate all parcels abutting, but outside of, the ALR boundary as Development Permit Areas with Guidelines for the purpose of protecting farming.
- d. Limit the area used for residential development on properties in the ALR.
- e. Limit the number of dwelling units to one on lots within the ALR. Any proposal for additional dwelling units would require approval from both Council and the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC).
- f. Seasonal farm labour accommodation, as an additional residential use, may be considered so long as the accommodation is accessory to the principal agricultural purpose and helps to support a farm operation in the Agricultural Land Reserve.

### Objective 2: Ensure agricultural production remains the primary use of agricultural land.

- a. Continue to encourage the use of the ALR land for farming and discourage non-farm uses (e.g. residential).
- b. Limit the subdivision of agricultural land into smaller parcels, except where measurable benefits to agriculture can be demonstrated as per the policies and regulations of the *Agricultural Land Commission Act*.
- c. Consider agricultural projects which achieve viable farming while avoiding residential development as a principal use.
- d. Encourage soil-based farming by regulating the amount of hardsurfacing in agricultural buildings, structures and greenhouses.
- e. Ensure agricultural production (e.g. growing of crops and raising animals) remains the primary use of agricultural land and ancillary uses (e.g. farm retail, storing, packing, preparing and processing of farm products) are secondary uses and consistent with the scale of the farm operation.
- f. Ensure soil deposit and removal proposals enhance agricultural capabilities (e.g. greater range of potential crops) and are consistent with City bylaws and policies, and Provincial requirements.







Photo Credit: Wade Comer Photography

PLN - 67

## Theme 2: Agricultural Economic Viability

### Objective 1: Enhance long-term agricultural viability and opportunities for innovation.

- a. Build relationships with farmers and the agricultural community through the City's Food Security and Agricultural Advisory Committee (FSAAC) to address issues impacting agricultural viability and food security.
- b. Increase public awareness of City and other initiatives related to agriculture by disseminating information on farming practices, farm products, and educational programs through the City's website, social media or other forms of communication.
- c. Provide information for new farmers and property owners of agricultural land, including property owners who own small parcels (e.g. less than 5 acres), to encourage active farming or lease the land for farming (e.g. Provincial land matching program).
- d. Encourage value-added agricultural related business initiatives consistent with City and Provincial regulations, while ensuring agricultural production remains the primary use of land.
- e. Develop agriculture-specific signage guidelines in order to support seasonal farm retail activities, including any necessary amendments to the City's Sign Bylaw.
- f. Continue to develop relationships with non-profit, academic and government organizations which promote local agriculture, organic growing, climate adaptation, carbon management and reductions in pesticide use.

### Objective 2: Support the use of agricultural land for local food production and encourage a local food network to increase local food supply and consumption.

- a. Continue to collaborate with Metro Vancouver, the Province, food producers, Vancouver Coastal Health, other municipalities and stakeholders to advance the goals in the Metro Vancouver Regional Food System Strategy.
- b. During the development application process, encourage applicants to consider urban agriculture into development projects outside of the ALR, including rooftop gardens, community gardens, vertical farming, backyard gardening, indoor farming, edible landscaping and the planting of food bearing trees.
- c. Raise public awareness, in coordination with the FSAAC, of local farming, farmer's markets, and local food products, produce and programs.
- d. Support food tourism initiatives, in coordination with Tourism Richmond, the FSAAC, and other local stakeholders to highlight local food production.
- e. Strengthen relationships with external organizations that provide agriculture-related educational opportunities and promote local farming.







Photo Credit: Wade Corner Photography

**PLN - 69**

## Theme 3: Infrastructure for Agriculture

### Objective 1: Continue improvements to irrigation and drainage infrastructure in support of agricultural production.

- a. Continue improvement of irrigation and drainage infrastructure to provide secure and suitable water supplies and functional drainage systems that support the agricultural sector while protecting environmental assets, in consultation with the agricultural community and relevant City departments.
- b. Consider separate water meters for the principal dwelling and the farm operation and ensure adequate service connections are installed for the farm operation.
- c. Update and implement the East Richmond Agricultural Water Supply Study.
- d. Encourage sustainable farm practices that utilize on-site water drainage, storage and use, and result in the reduction of potable water use.
- e. Continue to monitor the impact of the Fraser River 'salt wedge' on agricultural land and support improvements to supply salt-free irrigation water to affected areas.

### Objective 2: Support farm access to properties located in the ALR.

- a. Discourage, wherever possible, roads in the ALR, except as noted on the Existing Status of Road Improvements in the ALR Map.
- b. Consider how proposed road improvements (e.g. road widening) on existing City roads may impact farmland.
- c. For agricultural operations on agriculture sites with no direct road access, the City may facilitate farm access only (no new or improved roads) through unopened road allowances (via licensing agreements with the City).
- d. Regulate all soil deposition and removal, including for farm access roads, as permitted by Provincial regulations, through a City permitting process to ensure impacts are mitigated (e.g. adjacent properties, City property, Riparian Management Areas, and Environmentally Sensitive Areas).







Photo Credit: Wade Comer Photography

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## Theme 4: Agriculture and the Environment

### Objective 1: Mitigate the impacts of climate change on agricultural production.

- a. Coordinate with Metro Vancouver, ALC, and the Ministry of Agriculture to assess the long-term impacts of climate change on agriculture and develop a coordinated response and tools to protect agricultural production.
- b. Continue to protect agricultural land and agricultural production, in coordination with the City's Dike Master Plan, Flood Protection Management Strategy and climate action initiatives to address sea-level rise.
- c. Encourage sustainable farming practices, in coordination with relevant City departments, the FSAAC, ALC and Ministry of Agriculture, including water and soil conservation, greenhouse gas emissions reductions and soil management.
- d. Ensure soil deposit and removal proposals for agricultural production enhance agricultural capabilities (e.g. greater range of crops) and address environmental issues (e.g. climate change, carbon storage, and groundwater table), consistent with the City's Soil Bylaw.

### Objective 2: Maintain a balance between the natural environment and agricultural production.

- a. Continue to implement standard assessment criteria for farming properties where designated Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA) or Riparian Management Area (RMA) will be impacted, while continuing to support agricultural production.
- b. Investigate opportunities for reducing emissions from crop and livestock production, in coordination with the FSAAC, ALC and Ministry of Agriculture.
- c. Explore opportunities to promote the relationship between agricultural viability and biodiversity through agricultural practices that benefit wildlife.







PLN - 73

## Theme 5: Inter-Governmental Support for Agriculture

### Objective 1: Continue to work collaboratively with upper levels of government to enhance agricultural viability.

- a. Coordinate with ALC and Ministry of Agriculture to ensure City bylaws and policies are consistent with Provincial policies and regulations, including the *Agricultural Land Commission Act*, ALR Regulations, ALC Policies and the Minister's Bylaw Standards.
- b. Coordinate with ALC and Ministry of Agriculture to ensure development proposals are consistent with Provincial policies and regulations.
- c. Coordinate with Metro Vancouver to support the Regional Growth Strategy, which includes agricultural designations and policies for protection of agricultural land.

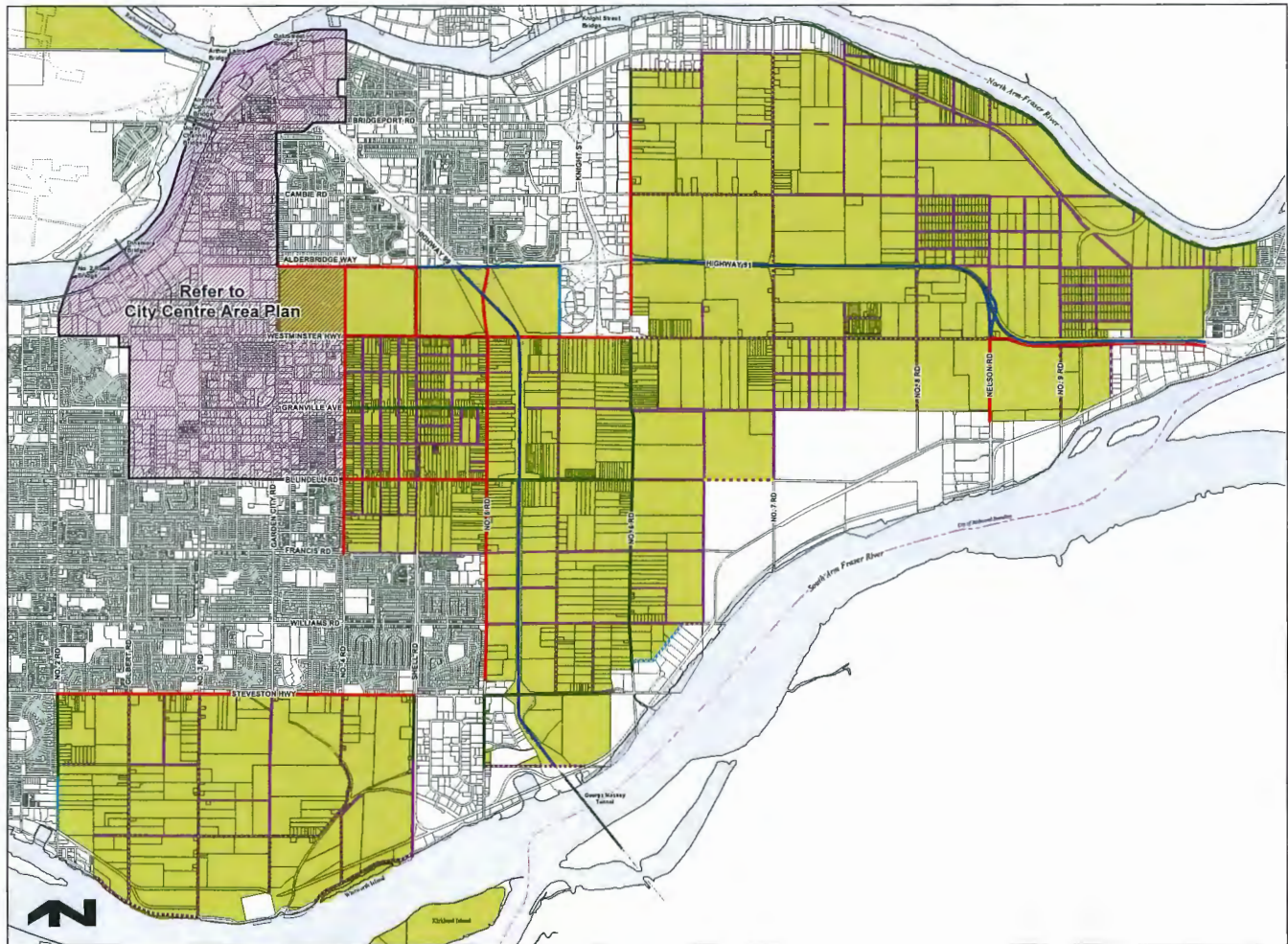
### Objective 2: Liaise with upper levels of government for legislative changes to support agricultural production.

- a. Continue to communicate with upper levels of government to address the following agricultural-related issues:
  - Review income threshold for farm status to encourage legitimate farming operations.
  - Protection for farmers who lease farmland and encourage longer term leases.
  - Strengthening the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* and the ALR Regulations to explicitly prohibit non-farm uses in the ALR and encourage agricultural production.
  - Enforcement of contraventions on ALR property (including monitoring, inspections, and penalties for non-compliance).
  - Improved regulations for non-soil based greenhouses and limiting such structures to areas with lower soil class agricultural land (e.g. Class 4 or lower).
  - Explore financial incentives for farming operations (e.g. grants, tax breaks and training opportunities).
  - Explore financial incentives for environmental/sustainable farm operations, organic farming and reduction in pesticide use.
  - Incorporation of environmental stewardship initiatives into the *Farm Practices Protection (Right to Farm) Act*.





# Existing Status of Road Improvements in the ALR



- Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR)
- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <p><b>Improved Roads</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 2px; background-color: #0000FF; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Provincial/Federal/Regional Highways</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 2px; background-color: #FF0000; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Major Arterial</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 20px; border-bottom: 2px dashed red; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Proposed Major Arterial</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 2px; background-color: #008000; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Minor Arterial</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 2px; background-color: #0000FF; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Collector</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 20px; border-bottom: 2px dashed blue; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Proposed Collector</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 20px; border-bottom: 2px dashed purple; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Agricultural</li> </ul> | <p><b>Unimproved Roads</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 2px; background-color: #800080; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Unimproved Road</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 20px; border-bottom: 2px dashed yellow; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Proposed Major Arterial</li> </ul> |
|---|--|

## Conclusion

The City of Richmond Farming First Strategy is a result of a multi-phased consultation process regarding the current and future issues, trends and challenges facing the agricultural industry. The Farming First Strategy includes themes, objectives and policies to guide decisions on the land use management of agricultural land, enhance public awareness of agriculture and food security issues, and strengthen agricultural viability in Richmond. Given that the City can only act within its legislative authority, the Farming First Strategy is also critical in identifying the need to work collaboratively with upper levels of government, including the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC), to ensure local agricultural production is supported.

The City recognizes the importance of agriculture as a food source, an environmental resource, a heritage asset and an important contributor to the local economy. Agricultural land and farming is sustained by long-term City policies that maintain an urban containment boundary that keeps residential growth outside of the ALR. Richmond residents have always placed a high value on the protection of the City's farmlands.





## City of Richmond

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### Farming First Strategy One-Year Review – Analysis of Farming First Strategy Actions

Farming First Strategy Actions	Progress	Comments
<b>Theme 1: Agricultural Land Base</b>		
Objective 1: Continue to protect the City's agricultural land base in the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR)		
Continue regular reporting on the status of agricultural land in Richmond ("Agricultural Hot Facts"), including total land in the ALR and agricultural production.	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The City's website contains information and statistics on the agricultural land base in Richmond, called "Agricultural Hot Facts", which staff update as new information and statistics become available.</li> <li>Staff expect new information and statistics on the agricultural land base in Richmond to be provided through the 2021 Census of Agriculture release. Metro Vancouver and the Ministry of Agriculture are also in the process of updating the Agricultural Land Use Inventory (ALUI) for Metro Vancouver. Staff will provide updates to Council on these resources once available.</li> <li>Staff can confirm there has been no loss of ALR land since the adoption of the Strategy.</li> </ul>
Continue to process Development Permits for parcels abutting, but outside of, the ALR boundary to manage the urban/rural interface.	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff continue to process Development Permits for parcels abutting, but outside of, the ALR boundary (excluding single-family development) to reduce impact on farmland.</li> <li>As part of the Farming First Strategy associated OCP amendments, the OCP DP Guidelines were amended to include specific ALR landscaped buffer guidelines to minimize agricultural-urban land use conflicts.</li> <li>In addition, through the development application process, a legal agreement is registered on title to ensure the ALR landscaped buffer is maintained and indicate that the property may be subject to potential agricultural impacts including noise, dust and odour.</li> </ul>
Objective 2: Ensure agricultural production remains the primary use of agricultural land.		
Maintain the current lot coverage limit for hardsurfacing in agricultural buildings and structures and continue to prohibit concrete in greenhouses as per the "Agriculture (AG1)" zone.	Completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The current "Agriculture (AG1)" zone prohibits all types of impermeable floor surfaces (incl. concrete slabs) for greenhouses and includes a maximum lot coverage for impermeable floor surfaces in agricultural buildings/structures.</li> <li>A "fast track" application process is available for proposals outside the scope of these regulations if the purpose is to support a legitimate farming operation. Staff have received and processed one application of this type, which was approved by Council (Maybog Farms - DV 21-934707).</li> <li>These regulations also apply to agri-tech related facilities. Staff will continue to monitor and assess the effectiveness of the current AG1 zoning regulations to encourage soil-based farming, and update Council accordingly.</li> </ul>
Continue to process Non-Farm Use, Subdivision and Soil Deposit/Removal applications consistent with the OCP and applicable City bylaws.	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff continue to process Soil Deposit and Removal applications and uphold the regulations under the City's Soil Deposit and Removal Bylaw No. 10200 and as per related Provincial legislation.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The City's Soil Deposit and Removal Bylaw No. 10200 was adopted by Council on July 26, 2021.</li> <li>As part of the OCP Targeted Update scope of works approved by Council, flood protection management, as it relates to fill, will be reviewed and updated from a climate adaption, resiliency, and climate change perspective.</li> </ul>
<b>Theme 2: Agricultural Economic Viability</b>		
<b>Objective 1: Enhance long-term agricultural viability and opportunities for innovation.</b>		
Continue to meet regularly with FSAAC to address emerging issues impacting agriculture and food security and review development applications impacting agricultural land.	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff worked closely with the FSAAC throughout the process of developing the Farming First Strategy.</li> <li>Since the adoption of the Strategy, staff continue to meet regularly with the FSAAC, with the purpose to advise Council on food security and agricultural issues referred by Council or staff.</li> <li>This includes reviewing the implementation of the action items associated with the Farming First Strategy, as presented by staff.</li> </ul>
Update the City's website to provide resources for new and existing farmers and continue to provide relevant information regarding agriculture and food security to the community through the City's social media.	Completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The agriculture section on the City's website has been updated to provide an overview of agriculture in the City, information/resources on City plans, policies and bylaws related to agriculture, and the Richmond Local Food Map.</li> <li>In addition, the City's website is regularly updated with bulletins on recent regulation changes related to agricultural land, to ensure the information available to the public is up-to-date.</li> <li>The City's social media channels also communicate information related to food security to the community through the promotion of the Richmond Food Recovery Network, through regular updates encouraging businesses and farmers to join.</li> </ul>
<b>Objective 2: Support the use of agricultural land for local food production and encourage a local food network to increase local food supply and consumption.</b>		
Work with developers to integrate urban agriculture (e.g. rooftop gardens, community gardens, vertical farming, backyard gardening, indoor farming, edible landscaping and the planting of food bearing trees) into development projects outside of the ALR.	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As per the OCP DP Guidelines, urban developments are encouraged to consider opportunities for urban agriculture where feasible.</li> <li>For example, the rezoning application associated with the Polygon Talisman project (RZ 18-836123), which received third reading on January 17, 2022, secured a 92.9 m<sup>2</sup> (1,000 ft<sup>2</sup>) rooftop urban agriculture demonstration project.</li> <li>As part of a separate referral, staff will be investigating the potential for urban agriculture and vertical farms in the City Centre and other high density areas and reporting back to Council.</li> </ul>
Update the Richmond Local Food Map in coordination with FSAAC and Tourism Richmond, to identify local farms and roadside stands to increase awareness and demand for locally grown agricultural products and to highlight local farmers.	Completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Planning and Economic Development staff, in partnership with the Richmond Food Security Society and Tourism Richmond, and with feedback from the Food Security and Agricultural Advisory Committee (FSAAC), updated the Richmond Local Food Map, highlighting local food producers.</li> <li>The updated Richmond Local Food Map is available on the City's website and Tourism Richmond's website.</li> </ul>



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff are currently working on the 2022 update, which will be promoted on social media and on-site at farmers markets and other events.</li> </ul>
<b>Theme 3: Infrastructure for Agriculture</b>		
Objective 1: Continue improvements to irrigation and drainage infrastructure in support of agricultural production.		
Continue to provide real-time salinity monitoring of water at the City's drainage pump stations to ensure dike water is suitable for irrigation purposes.	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Water salinity continues to be monitored in real-time at the City's drainage pump stations, with 24/7 dispatch alerts via the City's Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) system.</li> </ul>
Continue improvement of irrigation and drainage infrastructure to provide secure and suitable water supplies and functional drainage systems that support the agricultural sector.	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Irrigation and drainage infrastructure improvements are ongoing throughout the ALR. Projects completed in the last year include stabilization of canals, installation of canal level sensors, removal of invasive aquatic plant species, and construction of new culverts, watercourse crossings, and storm sewer infrastructure.</li> </ul>
Objective 2: Support farm access to properties located in the ALR.		
Develop a streamlined coordinated review process through the City's Engineering Department for farm access requests and ensure compliance with all City bylaws and Provincial policies and regulations.	Completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engineering and Planning staff, in coordination with applicable City departments, developed a formal process to consider farm access requests, including establishing specific staff roles and responsibilities, communication, and process requirements.</li> </ul>
Implement a licensing agreement process through the City's Engineering Department to allow farm access to agricultural sites with no direct road access through unopened road allowances (all costs to be borne by the property owner).	Completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engineering, Planning and Law staff, in coordination with Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) staff, implemented a licensing agreement process, which outlines specific requirements associated with farm access requests through unopened road allowances.</li> </ul>
<b>Theme 4: Agriculture and the Environment</b>		
Objective 1: Mitigate the impacts of climate change on agricultural production.		
Continue to assess the impacts of climate change on agricultural land while implementing the City's Dike Master Plan, Flood Protection Management Strategy and climate action initiatives. Staff are continuing to work on the outstanding referral regarding a long-term soil disposal management strategy, and the issue of land raising in response to anticipated climate change impacts, consistent with the Flood Protection Management Strategy.	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff are continuing to assess the impacts of climate change on agricultural land while implementing the City's Dike Master Plan, Flood Protection Management Strategy and climate action initiatives.</li> <li>In response to the referral regarding a long-term soil disposal management strategy, a report was brought forward to Council in 2021 highlighting the importance of land raising as supported in the City's Flood Protection Management Strategy. Land raising over the long-term is an effective way to mitigate the effect of climate change and sea level rise when undertaken using best practices. Properly done, land raising maintains or improves agricultural viability in the low-lying areas of Richmond, thereby increasing food security over the long-term.</li> </ul>



Coordinate with the Ministry of Agriculture, ALC and the FSAAC to provide resources to farmers regarding sustainable farming practices.	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ministry of Agriculture and ALC staff have provided updates regarding resources related to sustainable farming practices and it is anticipated that further information sharing will be provided to the FSAAC by the City's Environment staff.</li> </ul>
<b>Objective 2: Maintain a balance between the natural environment and agricultural production.</b>		
In the review of agricultural development applications, consider the balance between agricultural and environmental objectives (e.g. RMA & ESA).	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff are developing engagement initiatives targeted for Richmond's farming community and senior government that align with the goals listed in the Council endorsed Ecological Network Management Strategy and the Community Energy and Emissions Plan. The future initiatives aim to strengthen relationships with local farmers and regulators, and will identify key opportunities to align local farming practices with regional environmental stewardship objectives outlined in the Canada/BC Environmental Farm Plan Program, the CleanBC Roadmap, and the Canada 2030 Emissions Reduction Plan.</li> <li>Staff continue to process ESA Development Permits and ESA DP exemptions for agricultural activities as per the City's OCP. As part of the OCP Targeted Update scope of works approved by Council, staff will also be reviewing the current ESA mapping to ensure it is accurate and up-to-date.</li> </ul>
Coordinate with the Ministry of Agriculture, ALC and the FSAAC to provide resources to farmers regarding reducing emissions from crop and livestock production.	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CEEP 2050, adopted by Council in February 2022, includes the following strategies within the Enhance Green Infrastructure Strategic Direction: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Protect existing stock of sequestered carbon;</li> <li>Promote sustainable reuse of soil and waste biomass; and</li> <li>Scale-up carbon sequestration and offsets in Richmond.</li> </ul> </li> <li>It is anticipated that further information sharing regarding opportunities for emission reductions will be provided to the FSAAC by the City's Sustainability staff as applicable.</li> </ul>
<b>Theme 5: Inter-Governmental Support for Agriculture</b>		
<b>Objective 1: Continue to work collaboratively with upper levels of government to enhance agricultural viability.</b>		
Review the "Agriculture (AG1)" zone and Zoning Bylaw regularly to assess consistency with Provincial policies and regulations.	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff continue to monitor changes to Provincial policies and regulations related to land in the ALR, and update Council accordingly (e.g., Residential Flexibility and Controlled Environment Structures).</li> </ul>
Continue to refer applicable agricultural policy and development proposals to the ALC and Ministry of Agriculture.	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff continue to refer applicable agricultural policy and development proposals to the ALC and Ministry of Agriculture as needed (e.g., No. 5 Road Backlands Policy).</li> </ul>
<b>Objective 2: Liaise with upper levels of government for legislative changes to support agricultural production.</b>		
Deliver a letter to the Minister of Agriculture regarding the need to address the agricultural-related issues that require Provincial support as identified in the Farming First Strategy.	Completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Mayor, on behalf of Council, delivered a letter to the Minister of Agriculture, Richmond MLAs, &amp; Richmond MPs, dated April 23, 2021, presenting the Farming First Strategy and identifying the need to address the</li> </ul>

		<p>agricultural-related issues that require upper-level government support as identified in the Farming First Strategy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Minister of Agriculture provided a response letter, dated June 17, 2021, acknowledging the City's high priority for supporting and encouraging farming and the need to work collaboratively with other levels of government to support local farming.</li></ul>
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