

# Staff Report to Agricultural Advisory Committee

Planning and Development

FILE: 13-6635-20/26

**REPORT DATE:** March 10, 2026                      **MEETING DATE:** April 09, 2026  
**TO:** Agricultural Advisory Committee  
**FROM:** Allison Dominelli, Planner  
**SUBJECT:** Proposed Zoning Bylaw Amendments Related to Uses of Agricultural Land

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## **PURPOSE**

To report on public feedback received, and present proposed Zoning Bylaw amendments related to agricultural land for further committee comment and feedback. This report is for information purposes and to facilitate discussion; no formal motions are required.

Information Report                       Decision Report                       Direction Report

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Background:**

At the February 13, 2025, Agricultural Advisory Committee Meeting, staff presented a number of potential amendments to the Zoning Bylaw designed to implement objectives of the Agricultural Viability Strategy, mainly related to residential and non-farm uses of agricultural land.

After incorporating the AAC's feedback, these amendments were presented to Council at the April 8, 2025, Engagement and Priorities Committee Meeting (see Attachment A).

Public engagement was launched in September and included a backgrounder (i.e., summary information) and a feedback form (see Attachment B), mailed to all properties in the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR). The information and survey were also posted on the City's engagement website ([haveyoursaypittmeadows.ca](http://haveyoursaypittmeadows.ca)), and advertised through social media. In total, 177 surveys were completed (see Attachment C for a summary of the survey responses).

Based on feedback from the AAC, Council, and the public, staff have refined the proposed bylaw changes and present them to this AAC for further consideration.

**Relevant Policy, Bylaw or Legislation:**

The use of Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) land is governed by the provincial *Agricultural Land Commission Act (ALC Act)* and supporting *Agricultural Land Reserve Regulations*.

The Official Community Plan (OCP) identifies Pitt Meadows as a community where agriculture is the dominant land use and farmland is protected for food production. The OCP supports the preservation of ALR land for productive uses by discouraging subdivision, encouraging lot consolidation, and managing housing through farm home plate provisions.

The Agricultural Viability Strategy (AVS) also supports the protection of farmland for farming. It recommends updating the Zoning Bylaw to strengthen agriculture by: discouraging non-farm uses, restricting non-agricultural vehicle parking; combining multiple agricultural zones for ease of use; and considering farm home plate regulations.

The Zoning Bylaw regulates the use of agricultural land, and includes provisions for residential uses.

**Analysis:**

The backgrounder and feedback form (see Attachment B) identified six main potential changes to the Zoning Bylaw for consideration. The six main suggested changes are listed below, with a summary of the public input received, and corresponding staff recommendations. Further descriptions of each change are found in Attachment B.

**Potential Change #1: Combine the General Agricultural A-1, Large Lot Agricultural A-2 and Agricultural and Farm Industrial A-3 zones into one zone.**

There was general support for this proposal, with comments noting support for protecting farmland from estate development and subdivisions and for increasing minimum lot sizes to discourage speculation.

**Staff Recommendations:**

- Create new A-1 zone by combining A-1, A-2 and A-3 zones; and
- Clarify the minimum lot size for subdivision purposes is 16 ha.

ALC approval is still required for most subdivisions, but this change will streamline the agricultural zoning regulations. Existing properties will not be impacted by the minimum lot size for subdivision.

## **Potential Change #2: Update regulations related to on-site parking and vehicles.**

- a) Add a definition for “farm vehicle” to clarify non-farm vehicle parking and storage limitations;
- b) Limit recreational vehicles (RVs) to four on lots < 20 acres and six on lots > 20 acres; and
- c) Require unlicensed, non-farm vehicles to be stored indoors.

Mixed opinions were expressed, but it was generally acknowledged that clarity on regulations for both farm and non-farm vehicles is important and that enforcement can be challenging. The requirement for unlicensed, non-farm vehicles to be stored indoors was suggested to be costly and unnecessary.

### **Staff Recommendations:**

- Include a definition for “farm vehicle”, to reinforce that farm vehicles are not restricted, as follows:
  - **FARM VEHICLE** means a vehicle used exclusively for agricultural purposes, including farm tractors and trailers towed by them, but excluding vehicles used primarily for transporting people or property on a highway, other than farm workers.
- Limit recreational vehicles (RVs) to four on lots < 20 acres and six on lots > 20 acres; and
- Remove the proposed requirement for unlicensed, non-farm vehicles to be stored indoors, but retain the current limit of one unless stored indoors in a residential or residential accessory (i.e., non-agricultural) building.

The use of ALR land for non-farm parking or commercial vehicle storage (including RVs) is not currently permitted and is not intended to be permitted. Currently, one unlicensed non-farm vehicle is permitted to be stored outdoors on a property, and there are no restrictions on storing or parking of farm vehicles. The personal storage of RVs are not specifically permitted. Rather than changing the intent of the current regulations, the recommended revisions are intended to provide greater clarity for property owners and residents.

Legitimate farm vehicles will remain unrestricted, but these changes will enforce that agricultural land and buildings are not intended for storing non-farm vehicles, while permitting some personal vehicle storage onsite.

## **Potential Change #3: Implement residential footprint (i.e., farm home plate) regulations**

There was strong support to limit the size and impact of residential homes on agricultural land to prevent estate-style development and keep land available for farming. However, there were concerns noted about proposed restrictions on where homes can be located, and that there should be some flexibility for home plate locations when it makes sense (e.g., due to soil conditions, lot configuration, environmental or topography factors, etc.).

#### Staff Recommendations:

- Incorporate residential footprint regulations;
- Draft a bylaw to delegate development variance permits to staff for issuance, that would allow for alternative residential footprint regulations based on meeting established criteria (e.g., soil conditions, topographic or environmental constraints); and
- Include an exemption to the residential footprint regulations for existing homes where a proposed addition or accessory building is minor (e.g. <100 m<sup>2</sup>).

These changes will help preserve more land for productive agricultural uses, while providing options and a streamlined pathway for situations where an alternative residential footprint can be considered.

#### **Potential Change #4: Reduce the maximum size of new homes on smaller parcels**

There were mixed views on further limiting the size of homes on farmland. Many people expressed support for caps to prevent “mega homes” that drive up land prices and reduce agricultural capacity. Others raised the issue of multi-generational living and farm-related needs.

#### Staff Recommendations:

- Introduce a house size limit of 400 m<sup>2</sup> on lots <8 ha.

This change is only proposed for smaller agricultural lots, and is intended to limit residential “estate” homes where there is comparatively less intensive or no farming activity. Owners will still have the option to apply for site-specific variances and this regulation will be monitored and can be amended in the future if necessary.

#### **Potential Change #5: Remove allowance for garden suites on parcels smaller than 8,094 m<sup>2</sup> (2 acres) in size**

There was limited support for this change. Rather, support was expressed for maintaining this provision, albeit noting that the location of the garden suite is important, e.g., placement within the residential footprint. An inconsistency was noted in restricting garden suites amid a housing crisis.

#### Staff Recommendations:

- Omit this change from proposed amendments and retain the current zoning regulations allowing garden suites on smaller parcels

Garden suites will continue to be permitted on those small lots that are not subject to ALC use regulations (i.e., less than 2 acres in size and created by subdivision prior to the ALR formation).

## Potential Change #6: Simplify temporary farm worker housing regulations

There was general support for simplifying the rules for temporary farm worker housing, recognizing that these workers are essential for many agricultural operations and farms need flexibility to accommodate them.

Staff Recommendations:

- Remove the minimum lot size required for the location of the housing;
- Simplify the maximum number of farm workers that can be accommodated on a single property to:
  - a) 130 for greenhouse, mushroom, tree fruit and berry/vegetable production
  - b) 40 for all other commodities; and
- Increasing the maximum housing floor area per worker to 13 m<sup>2</sup> (140 ft<sup>2</sup>).

These regulations are consistent with the ALC criteria for CEO delegated decision-making regarding temporary farm worker housing. Aligning with the ALC criteria should provide faster ALC processing approval times for applicants.

Some additional zoning amendments were previously identified but not included in the public feedback due to their more administrative nature, as follows:

- Move existing Specific Use Regulations to the new A-1 zone;
- Clarify existing total lot coverage requirements;
- Remove redundant allowances for mobile homes; and
- Improve and clarify definitions where possible.

These items were identified in the previous report to the AAC on this topic, and staff recommend proceeding with these amendments.

### Conclusion:

At this time, staff appreciate any additional feedback from this AAC on the proposed amendments, before drafting any bylaws and presenting them to Council for consideration.

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### **KATZIE FIRST NATION CONSIDERATIONS**

Referral     Yes     No

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**SIGN-OFFS**

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**ATTACHMENT(S):**

- A. April 8, 2025 Staff Report to Engagement and Priorities Committee
- B. Public engagement backgrounder and feedback form
- C. Public engagement summary
- D. Full public engagement comments