

An Evaluation of the Investment Agriculture Foundation Local Government Agricultural Planning Program

APPENDICES

A. Interview guides

1. Key informant interviews
2. LGAP ‘founders and shapers’

B. Summaries of completed agricultural plans

1. Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen (Electoral Area C - Rural Oliver, Oliver)
2. Corporation of Township of Spallumcheen
3. Regional District of Central Okanagan
4. District of Summerland
5. City of Salmon Arm
6. Regional District of Comox-Strathcona
7. District Municipality of North Cowichan
8. City of Richmond
9. City of Surrey

C. Suggested step-wise agricultural planning process

AAP site: _____
Date of interview: _____

Interview # _____

Program Review: An Evaluation of the 'Local Government Agricultural Planning Program'

INTERVIEW GUIDE

General objectives:

This research is predicated on collecting information from identified knowledgeable persons about efforts to establish Agriculture Area Plans in British Columbia. To establish credibility it is preferable to use identifying information (e.g., name, title, organisation) whenever appropriate, and only with your permission. No personal identifying information (e.g., home address or telephone number) will be used. With your permission the audio of this interview will also be recorded.

The questions are organised in seven sections: your profile, issues, objectives, process, implementation, outcomes, and use of IAF funding.

Part 1. YOUR PROFILE

Name of interviewee: _____

Organisation: _____

Title: _____

Contact information:

Tel.: _____

Email: _____

Address: _____

- 1.1. Please describe your interest in agriculture in the community.
- 1.2. With regard to your position as [state person's position], what is your primary area of responsibility in relation to agriculture?
 - 1.2. Please describe your role in the AAP planning process.
 - 1.3. Please describe your level of authority and influence with regard to the decisions made during the planning process and to the final outcome.

Part 2. ISSUES IDENTIFIED IN THE PLAN

- 2.1. Based on information we have collected, I understand that the primary issues that the AAP planning process dealt with were [short description of issues specific to the AAP].
 - a) Do you think this account of the issues is accurate? Complete? Please explain.
- 2.2. From your perspective, do you think any of these issues were more important than others?
- 2.3. Have the issues for this area changed since the AAP was completed?

Part 3. OBJECTIVES OF THE PLAN

- 3.1. Based on information we have collected, we understand that the primary objectives that the AAP planning process dealt with were [short description of objectives specific to the AAP].
 - a) Do you think this account of the objectives is accurate? Please explain.

- b) If you had the opportunity to re-write the objectives, would you change anything?

Part 4. PROCESS USED TO CREATE PLAN

- 4.1. Based on information we have collected, we understand that the process used to create the AAP included the following elements [short description of development process; provide diagram if available].
 - a) Do you think this account of the process used to create the AAP is accurate? Please explain.
 - b) Who were the major stakeholders? What influence did each have on the process?
 - c) What elements of the process used to create the AAP worked well?
 - d) What elements of the process used to create the AAP did not work well?
 - e) What elements of the process used to create the AAP could have been improved?
 - f) Do you have any other comments about the process used to create the AAP?
- 4.2 With regard for the format of the plan, to what extent are you satisfied with the way the plan looks and feels (for example, its structure, wording, and format)?
 - i. Do you think it is easy to read?
 - ii. Do you think it is easy to use the way the information is presented?

Part 5. OUTCOMES OF THE PLAN

General outcomes

- 5.1. Based on information we have collected, we understand that the AAP led to several outcomes [short description of outcomes specific to the site].
 - a) Do you think this account of these outcomes is accurate?
 - b) What other outcomes, as a result of the AAP, can you tell me about?
 - c) To what extent did the AAP contribute to these outcomes?
 - d) Were there other factors, that were not directly related to the AAP, that played significant roles in the outcomes?
- 5.2 What have been the impacts, both positive and negative, of these outcomes? [refer to the AAP whenever desired impacts are stated]
 - a) Has local agriculture benefited from the creation of the AAP?
 - b) Has the creation of the AAP influenced or affected agricultural land uses, such as the Agriculture Land Reserve (ALR)?
 - c) Has the creation of the AAP reduced urban/rural conflict?
 - d) To what extent has the creation of the AAP improved local economic activity from farming? Has there been an impact on net farm income?
 - e) Has the creation of the AAP established consistency with provincial policy and legislation?
 - f) To what extent has the creation of the AAP helped to build sustainable communities with balanced economic diversity?
 - i. [stated differently] Has the creation of the AAP helped to integrate agriculture with other community priorities, whether economic, environmental, or social?
 - g) Has the AAP helped to increase public awareness and knowledge of agriculture?
 - h) Has the AAP enhanced agricultural opportunities in the community?
- 5.3 To what extent are you satisfied with these outcomes?

[I would like to explore, in more detail, the role and uses of the AAP with regard to specific decisions.]

Actions to put the plan into practice

- 5.1. [if applicable] Based on information we have collected, we understand that the AAP included the following actions to implement the plan [refer to steps outlined in the AAP].
- a) To what extent have these steps been followed? Please explain any deviations.
 - b) To what extent did having these implementation steps laid out in the AAP help achieve the outcomes we discussed?

Agriculture Advisory Committee

- 5.2 a) What role, if any, has the AAC played after the AAP was developed?
- i. To implement the steps identified in the AAP?
 - ii. To provide a link between the municipal government and the agriculture sector?
- b) [If AAC no longer plays a role in decision making] Why does the AAC no longer play a role?
- i. What led to the disbanding of the committee?
- 5.3 Has the membership of the AAC changed since the plan was adopted? If so, what have been the impacts of these changes, positive and negative?
- 5.4 Overall, what is your assessment of how well the AAC has used the AAP to support local agriculture?

Agriculture Land Reserve and Commission

[if applicable, refer to specific ALC decisions]

- 5.5 To what extent, if any, has the AAP influenced decisions of the ALC?
- a) Did members of the ALC make explicit reference to the AAP?
 - b) Did members of the public make explicit reference to the AAP?
 - c) To what extent, if any, has the AAP improved the relation between the ALC and the ALR?

Town Council

[if applicable, refer to specific Council discussions on ALC applications]

- 5.5 To what extent, if any, has the AAP influenced decisions of the Town Council?
- a) Did members of Town Council (or its staff) make explicit reference to the AAP?
 - b) Did members of the public make explicit reference to the AAP?
 - c) [if not addressed above] What role did the AAC play in decisions of Town Council?

Part 6. IAF LGAPP PROGRAM

- 6.1. How was IAF funding used?
- 6.2. To what extent do you think it was used effectively?
- 6.3. How might it be used more effectively to develop future AAPs?

Other comments:

REFERRALS TO OTHER INTERVIEWEES

We'd like your help in identifying people or organisations we should interview as part of this project. We are looking for a range of opinions of the AAP, including both people who support the plan and those who might not support it. Can you suggest some key people we should interview? [Note: to protect confidentiality, if required, do not say who we are going to interview.]

Program Review: An Evaluation of the ‘Local Government Agricultural Planning Program’

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Key informant interviews with LGAP ‘founders and shapers’

The focus is on EFFICACY

Focus on LOCAL GOVERNMENT AGRICULTURAL PLANNING PROGRAM

Focus on LOCAL GOVERNMENT

1. The aim of the LGAP program is, “to develop practical and viable solutions to rural-urban issues and identify opportunities that benefit both agriculture and the community.”

- a) What does this mean to you?
- b) If this objective was achieved then what do you think would be the outcomes?
- c) Which of these outcomes do you think are the most important?

2. What is the role of a local government in achieving these important outcomes?

3. For the LGAP program, “The overarching expected outcome of an Agricultural Area Plan is that it be formally Adopted and used to guide implementation activities.” In your view, what are the intended benefits of formally adopting an Agricultural Area Plan?

4. [if possible, refer to previous statements to provide bridge to this question, e.g., you have used the two terms AAP and agricultural planning interchangeably; you have used the two terms AAP and agricultural planning very differently]
To what extent do you distinguish between Agricultural Area Plans and agricultural planning?

[Note: a discussion between the two terms may arise. Engage in a full discussion to help the interviewee understand the difference. A better understanding will help us to understand the efficacy of the LGAPP. It will also prepare the interviewee for the next question.]

5. I’d like to re-visit the first question about the aims of the LGAP program. You stated that the most important outcomes were ... [list as required].

- a) Would you like to add to or revise this list of important outcomes?
- b) You also stated that the role of a local government is to ... [list as required].
Would you like to add to or revise your response?

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

IAF LGAPP Brochure

“For local governments, the benefits of developing an Agricultural Area Plan can be expected to include reduced urban/rural conflict, improved local economic activity from farming, consistency with provincial policy and legislation, and sustainable communities with balanced economic diversity. Agricultural issues and the impact of decisions on the business of farming will be better understood by those charged with local planning and bylaws.”

Strengthening Farming

“An agricultural area plan focuses on a community's farm area to discover practical solutions to issues and identify opportunities to strengthen farming and ultimately to contribute to agriculture and the community's long-term sustainability.”

IAF Supporting Local Government Agriculture Planning Programs (Revised December 2008)

“The Foundation funding can be used to support a range of activities relating to agriculture within municipalities and regional districts that leads to development of a shared vision and the implementation of a plan for agriculture in the community.”

“The overarching outcome of an AAP is that it be formally adopted.

Therefore a proposal must identify how the results of the planning process will be used to:

- ensure the inclusion of the Agriculture Advisory Committee on an on-going basis in local government plans, bylaws and regulations;
- develop a shared vision of agriculture in the community;
- enhance agriculture opportunities in the community;
- lessen the potential for land use conflict; and,
- integrate agriculture with other priorities within rural areas.”

Regional District of Central Okanagan *Agricultural Plan* Summary

Regional District of Central Okanagan Statistics:

Population (2006)	162,276 ¹
Jurisdictional Area:	
Regional District of Central Okanagan	303,490 ha
Plan Study Area	not available: see maps
Total Area Farmed (2006)	27,201 ha
Number of Farms (2006)	1,017
ALR	27,305 ha

*

Date of *Agricultural Plan*: June, 2005

Title: *Regional District of Central Okanagan Agricultural Plan*

Length: 55 pages

Prepared by: True Consulting Group, Integra Community Planning Services

Adoption Status:

- Unknown. Not found in council minutes.

Related documents:

- Regional District of Central Okanagan - Agricultural Plan Background Report

Purpose Statement:

- *“to enhance the viability of the agricultural sector in the Regional District by addressing farm viability issues arising from resource potential, diversification opportunities, urbanization conflicts and competition for agricultural land. While it is recognized that there are a broad range of issues and jurisdictions that have an impact upon agriculture, the main focus of this Agricultural Plan will be on those issues that lie within the jurisdiction of the Regional District”.* (1)

Highlights:

- Applies to areas outside of Member Municipalities, mainly consisting of ALR lands.
- *“The purpose of the Plan is to identify what the Regional District can do to encourage agricultural activity within the ALR and to help agriculture compete with other uses for a limited land base.”* (2).

¹ Includes Member Municipalities: City of Kelowna, District of Lake Country, District of West Kelowna, and District of Peachland.

Outlined Issues & Objectives

1. Legislative & Governance Structure

1.1. Strengthening Policy and Governance

Issue: The view of the permanent role of agriculture should be clearly articulated and/or acknowledged through all policy and governance opportunities.

- There is a need to re-affirm the commitment to the long-term preservation of agricultural lands. Rapid growth has created pressure to urbanize, and created conflict at the interface between agricultural and other land uses.
- The Local Government Act provides provisions for Farm Bylaws; standards can be established and enforced, as well as varied based differing farm/agricultural characteristics.
- A more integrated approach, between levels and departments, would provide for a more “seamless” approach to the administration of agriculture.

Objectives: Re-affirm the essential role of the ALR as integral, ensure that major Plans and initiatives of the region reflect the agriculture industry, provide Farm Bylaw control of agricultural activities, to actively participate in all aspects of agricultural planning and development approvals process in the region, working towards integration of agricultural interests, and to ensure that the AAC is both best equipped and informed about agricultural matters.

2. Infrastructure

2.1. Irrigation

Issues: Adequate protection and efficient use of water supplies is necessary to ensure water sources remain viable.

- Climatic change may introduce changes in water availability and/or quantity. Agriculture is only one of many competing interests for water.
- Seasonal low-flow periods may change as a result of climate change.
- There are numerous irrigation districts within the Regional District; no single agency has prepared a strategic plan to address water issues.

Objective: *“Support retention, growth and sustainable development of an agricultural industry that is largely dependent on irrigation.”* (13)

2.2. Roads

Issues: Roads in agricultural areas support farm, local, and through traffic; there is potential for conflict. These same roads are often the only separation between urban and farm land uses.

- Traffic is increasing as regional growth is increasing.
- Expansion of road networks through agricultural areas creates loss and fragmentation of land and increased potential for traffic conflict.
- The Provincial Ministry of Transportation is a principle stakeholder in this issue.

Objective: *“To optimize traffic safety and efficiency of movement in agricultural areas while minimizing the traffic impacts on agricultural lands and agricultural activities.”* (16).

2.3. Sanitary and Storm Sewer

Issue: Opportunities exist to enhance agriculture through liquid waste planning and storm water management planning.

- Liquid waste presents irrigation opportunities, while storm/farm drainage can be improved through management planning. Public education on these matters is crucial to success.

Objective: *“To enhance agricultural opportunities through utility service infrastructure planning.”* (19)

3. Economics

3.1. External Competition

Issue: Local, national, and international agricultural economic change places strain on the Okanagan industry to remain adaptive, competitive, and economically viable.

- Cooperation between organizations and governments is necessary to market, support, and research localised food opportunities.

Objective: *“To assist in maintaining competitive agricultural market conditions in the RDCO, and nurturing an industry that is responsive and adaptive to changing conditions in agricultural product demand.”* (22)

3.2. Costs of Production

Issue: The costs of production (land, labour, supplies, equipment) must remain competitive to agricultural operations in other areas.

- The local economy would benefit from a local suppliers of agricultural inputs.
- Recommendations are provided for increased support of agritourism, heritage awareness, farmer's market activity, festivals, and signage to increase awareness and economic viability of local industries.

Objective: *"To provide local government assistance where feasible to minimize agricultural production costs."* (23)

3.3. Land Costs

Issue: Land costs are high for agricultural land due to the pressure for land for urban growth.

- There is a need to create awareness that ALR land is for agricultural use, and not future urban growth. Cooperation with the ALC and Assessment Office is necessary to create this awareness, and decrease farm land value.

Objective: *"To achieve and maintain land costs for agricultural purposes that permit current and future operations to remain as viable economic interests in the region."* (25)

4. Rural-Urban Fringe

4.1. Edge Permanency

Issue: Separation of urban-rural land uses is necessary to provide clarity and certainty of the role of ALR land.

- Possibilities for the urban side include covenants, land use regulations, DPAs, and road designs.
- Possibilities for the rural side include buffers, farm bylaws, road design, and financial support to farm industry for development.

Objective: *"To develop rural-urban edge conditions in the region that provide clarity, permanency and effectiveness for both agricultural and community development interests."* (26)

4.2. Edge Separation

Issue: Inadequate, ineffective and impermanent buffering provisions between rural and urban areas.

- Buffering is necessary to achieve a sense of separation. DPAs are suggested, as well as covenants, and disclosure, by developers to buyers, of farm activity. Other buffering measures are suggested, as well as the possibility of a farm bylaw.

Objective: *"To develop rural-urban edge conditions that encourage sensitive co-existence of rural-urban use"* (28).

4.3. Farm Practices

Issue: Conflicts between rural and urban communities on matters such as noise, dust, odour, trespass, vandalism and theft.

- The Farm Practices Protection Act establishes the rights of farms, however efforts are needed to raise awareness of these rights.
- Efforts to improve edge permanency will strengthen this awareness.
- F.P.P.A. encourages use of bylaws to support agriculture.

Objective: *"To improve awareness of farm practices and the rights and responsibilities of the farm and non-farm sectors."* (30)

4.4. Non Farm Rural Development

Issue: Rural settings are attractive to non-farm residential uses.

- There is significant demand to build rural estates on small ALR parcels; this type of development fragments agricultural land, often rendering it non-farmable.

Objective: *"Minimize the impacts of new estate residences in the ALR on lands with farming potential."* (31)

5. Environment

5.1. Environmental Farm Practices

Issue: Support of sound environmental farm practices, that do not adversely effect other areas.

- The Environmental Farm Plan program is in place to assist farmers., including financial assistance.
- Issues arise surrounding insect control, disposal of wood-cuttings & organic material, and weed/insect control (as well as enforcement of).

Objective: Encourage minimal adverse environmental impacts as a result of farm practices, ensure cost-effect benefits of insect control, ensure environmentally-safe waste disposal, adapt to climate change, provide for regulatory control over abandoned farmland (to protect adjacent farmland properties).

5.2. Recreation Activities & Corridors

Issue: A growing population and tourism market generates continued pressure for recreation opportunities.

- Recreation on farmland is often assumed, demand increases with population increase.
- Increases opportunities for the spread of weeds, litter, vandalism, and trespassing.
- Recreational opportunities can contribute to agriculture, through agri-tourism.
- Planning is necessary to minimize impact of recreation corridors.

Objective: Limit encroachment of recreation on agricultural land, avoid/mitigate disruption of farming activities, increase public awareness & education, incorporate recreation corridor planning with general planning & buffering for agriculture.

6. Education

6.1. Public Awareness of Agriculture

Issue: *“Commitment to the protection or agricultural land needs to be strengthened by broad public awareness of the value of local agriculture.”*

- 78% of residents are urban - it is necessary to have continuing efforts to heighten local awareness of agriculture. Reinforcement of the value of ALR is necessary as well.

Objective: *“Maintain and enhance efforts to heighten awareness of local agriculture and the Agricultural Land Reserve.”* (40)

6.2. Farm Succession & Research

Issue: A process is needed to ensure that farm succession and introduction of new farm practices results in an improvement of agriculture, and the passing of rural codes of conduct.

- There is an aging farming population in the RDCO. There is a need to maintain the knowledge base, and to explore new opportunities to improve agriculture. Changing global patterns (such as fuel prices) may create new opportunities, knowledge will benefit this possibility.

Objective: *“Ensure continued and/or improved productivity from the agricultural land base during changes in land ownership or changes in agricultural production”* (41).

7. Industry Support

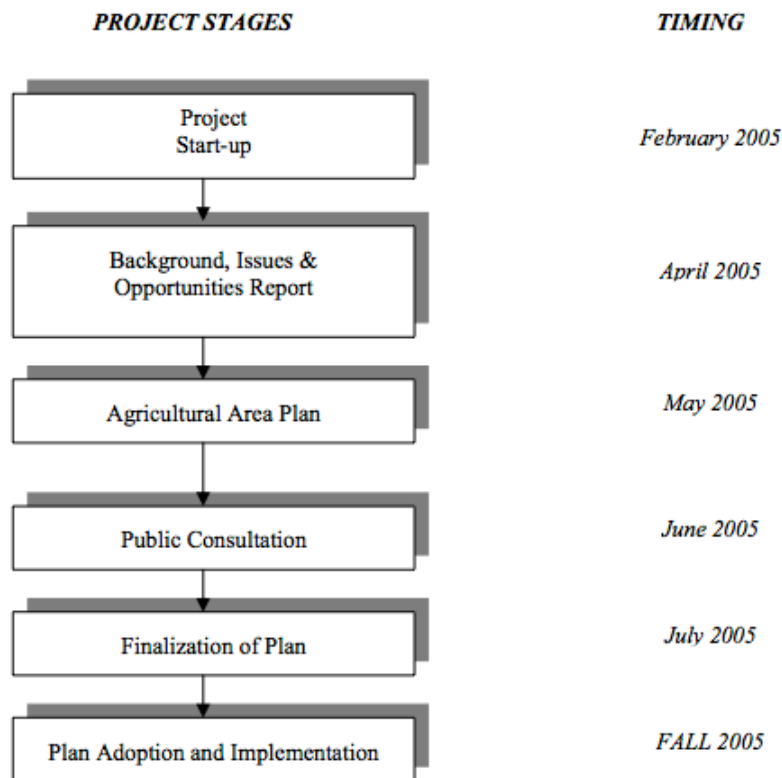
7.1. Agricultural Support Officer

Issue: *“The farm community lacks local resources to assist with the promotion and enhancement of agricultural opportunities.”*

- Additional support includes business planning, educational opportunities, improved access to information and avenues to liaise with other agricultural agencies and institutions.

Objective: *“Establish an Agricultural Support Officer position as a pilot project within the organization of the Economic Development function.”* (44)

Development Process/Timeline:



Regional District of Central Okanagan OCP Supporting Statements¹:

The AAP outlines four distinct areas within the district that are covered by the plan: Ellison, North Westside, Westside & Joe Rich. See maps for details.

1. Ellison Official Community Plan

- “Support the ‘Agricultural Plan” contained The intention of the plan is to determine actions and policies within the mandate of a Regional District that are supportive of agriculture.” (14-3)
- The Ellison OCP contains an extensive Agricultural Policy section.
- The Ellison OCP echoes many of the policies outlined in the RDCO Agricultural Plan, including:
 - Support and acknowledgement of agriculture as an important basis for economic stability & preservation of agriculture within the district.
 - Consultation with the ALC.
 - Support of secondary activities, limited residential development, development and expansion of agricultural activities, and efficient interface planning.

2. Westside Official Community Plan.

- The Westside OCP pre-dates the RDCO Agricultural Plan - there is no direct reference to the AAP besides from an objective to “Develop” an ‘agricultural plan’.
- There is an extensive section on agricultural policies, containing many of the objectives contained within the RDCO Agricultural plan, including:
 - Support and acknowledgement of agriculture as an important basis for economic stability & preservation of agriculture within the district.
 - Consultation with the ALC
 - Support development, improvement and expansion of agriculture, as well as secondary activities that contribute to farming income.
 - Ensure efficient interface planning. (14-4).

3. North Westside Official Community Plan
 - The Westside OCP (1999) pre-dates the RDCO Agricultural Plan - there is no direct reference to the AAP.
 - The OCP outlines a number of agricultural objectives, including:
 - Protect & maintain economic viability of the agricultural sector.
 - Support buffering & screening of agricultural land
 - Support the ALC
 - Preserve large rural & agricultural parcels.
4. Joe Rich Land Use Bylaw
 - *“Support the policies and activities of the [RDCO] in support of farming as an activity and a business, such as the Regional District Agricultural Plan and the recommendations it contains, the Regional District Agricultural Advisory Committee, and the Regional District Agricultural Support Officer.*
 - The land use bylaw states one objective: *“ Identify, protect and preserve land of good agricultural quality.”* (4-9).

AAC Status:

- Ongoing. Last meeting on April 13, 2010.
<http://www.regionaldistrict.com/departments/planning/planning_pubcon.aspx>

References to Agricultural Land Commission Act:

- Brief mention of ALC buffering guidelines (to minimize edge conflict). (27)

References to the Right to Farm (Farm Practices Protection) Act:

- Acknowledgement of the rights of farmers as a result of the F.P.P.A. (30)
- A recommendation to ensure consistency between noise by-laws and the F.P.P.A. regarding the use of bird scare devices (within section 5.2: Rural-Urban Fringe) (29)
- Education information that should be provided on the farm industry & legislation. (Section 8.2: Education) (43)
- The ability to enact farm bylaws is acknowledged. (8)

References to Water Rights (Canada Water Act, BC Water Act):

- None.
- References to multiple jurisdictions and lack of joint strategic water plan (Section 3.1: Infrastructure) (14).

Corporation of the Township of Spallumcheen¹ *Agricultural Area Plan* Summary

Spallumcheen Statistics²:

Population (2006)	4,960
Jurisdictional Area:	
Township	25,884 ha
Plan Study Area	25,884 ha
Total Area Farmed (date)	17,155 ha
% of Farmland:	54%
Number of Farms (date)	450
ALR	14,002

Date of Agricultural Plan: August 2006

Title: Township of Spallumcheen Agricultural Area Plan Phase 3 Final Report.

Length: 28 pages.

Prepared by: Zbeetnoff Agro-Environmental Consulting & Quadra Planning Consultants Ltd.

Adoption Status:

- Adopted by council resolution on November 20, 2006.

Related documents:

- Phase 1 Report: Township of Spallumcheen Agricultural Situation Profile, May 29, 2006.
- Phase 2 Report: Issues and Opportunities Analysis Working Draft, June 5, 2006
- Workshop Findings Report, July 14, 2006.

Purpose Statement:

- *“Allow profitable farming to flourish by:
Promoting best agricultural practices
Strengthening and supporting agriculture
Encouraging “good neighbour” communications
Protecting the rural character
Initiating public education.” (4)*

¹ The Township of Spallumcheen is within the North Okanagan Regional District.

² Township of Spallumcheen – Agriculture in Brief. 2009. Province of British Columbia. Ministry of Agriculture and Lands.

Highlights:

- *“The Township of Spallumcheen has embraced its agricultural sector and put policies and bylaws into place to meet this objective.”* (iii)
- *“The Township of Spallumcheen has commissioned this [AAP] to assist with the implementation of agricultural policies contained in the municipality’s OCP.*
- The mandate of the Agricultural Advisory Committee is to: *“... ensure the continuing sustainability of agriculture.”* (4)
- *“A high priority has been placed on the promotion of sustainable agriculture in the Township of Spallumcheen. Spallumcheen’s motto is: “Where farming comes first.”* (4)

Outlined Issues & Opportunities:

1. Protection of the Resource Base
 - Fragmentation of land in the ALR & small parcels
 - Lot size represents potential for rural residential incursion into ALR; small lots tend to be non-farm uses.
 - Limited availability of and obstacles to irrigation development.
 - Spillover effects from the City of Armstrong’s growth.
2. Agricultural Viability
 - High proportion of small farms, & farms with low gross farm income; average gross farm receipts declining.
 - Average age of farmers increasing.
 - Increasing farmland prices.
 - Average farm expenses are high
 - Limited local agricultural marketing
 - Increasing pressure for recreation
3. Agro-Environmental Interface
 - Agriculture in competition with residential for water.
 - Aquifer resources are at extraction capacity in some areas, vulnerable to contamination in others.
 - Opportunities for the number of Environmental Farm Plans to increase
4. Regulatory Issues
 - Pressure to rezone and subdivide lots in the ALR
 - Growth needs to be directed to existing subdivision and land outside ALR
 - Landscape buffering needs to occur in new developments
 - Monitoring of home occupations within ALR is necessary to meet zoning bylaw regulations.
 - Enforcement of bylaws is necessary to control nuisance weeds.
5. “Profile of Agriculture” Issues
 - Agricultural knowledge is not being passed on to new generations.
 - General public knows little about food production and origin.
 - The challenges of agricultural sustainability are not understood by farmers, the general public or politicians.

Outlined Goals & Strategies:

NOTE: All strategies in this summary and in the *Agricultural Area Plan* are recommendations only, provided by the consultant, the AAC, and other contributors to the farm plan. Following is a summary of the “Goals”, and “Strategies”.

1. Support and strengthen local agricultural enterprise.
 - Increase community demand for local products
 - Increase revenue that gets re-spent in community
 - Reduce the cost of doing business.
 - Remove unnecessary middlemen.
 - Promote diversification of local food products.
 - Promote diversification of agro-based suppliers
 - Promote efforts to create value-added benefits within the Township

Township of Spallumcheen - *Agricultural Area Plan* Summary

- Provide opportunities to recruit new farmers.
 - Encourage local farmers to work together.
2. Avoid extra costs and regulation.
 - Ensure that regulations do not compromise agriculture
 - Consider crediting operations exhibiting desired behaviour.
 3. Work with the farm sector to make operations more productive and efficient.
 - Enhance access to the agricultural land base
 - Promote farm transportation plans in the interest of efficiency.
 - Support improvements that increase productivity.
 4. Protect the resource base for agriculture.
 - Discourage any encroachment on the agricultural land base.
 - Reserve water for agriculture.
 - Encourage resource use efficiency
 - Get idle agricultural land back into productive agriculture.
 5. Promote best agricultural practices.
 - Support information surrounding best agricultural practices
 - Support businesses that cater to agricultural issues.
 6. Minimize the impact of agriculture on the environment.
 - Encourage adoption of environmentally friendly practices by the agricultural sector.
 - Encourage conservation of resources.
 7. Protect rural character.
 - Develop a definition of “rural character” to guide land use
 - Ensure promotion of rural character does not jeopardize the working landscape for agriculture.
 8. Encourage “Good Neighbour” communications.
 - Encourage communication and interaction between stakeholders
 - Promote forums to facilitate communication.
 9. Initiate public education.
 - Support initiatives that inform people about agriculture.
 - Promote venues that exhibit agriculture.

Development Process/Timeline:

- Goals laid out by the AAC
- Public Open House - November 2005
- Phase 1 Report - May 2006
- Public Open House - June 2006
- Phase 2 Report Draft - June 2006
- 2 General Public Workshops - June 2006
- Phase 2 Report Completed
- Workshop Findings report - June 2006
- Phase 3 Final Report Completed - August 2006
- Public Open House - Final Report recommendations presented. - November 2006
- Council Adoption - November 2006

Township of Spallumcheen OCP Supporting Statements⁴:

- No direct reference to Spallumcheen *Agricultural Area Plan*, or an amendment containing a reference. The OCP (2004) pre-dates the Spallumcheen *Agricultural Area Plan*. .
- Statements in support of agriculture:
 - The Spallumcheen OCP contains a section titled “Agricultural Land”, outlined specific policies to retain land for agricultural purposes, and to cooperate with the ALC on ALR decisions.

Township of Spallumcheen - *Agricultural Area Plan* Summary

- “It is the primary goal of the Township of Spallumcheen to preserve the Township’s agricultural land base, the community’s rural character and environmental attributes while allowing changes in land use which will not compromise this primary goal.” (5)
- “The township does not support the transition of viable agricultural land to non-agricultural uses.” (9)

AAC Status:

- Unknown. Doesn't appear to be active.

References to Agricultural Land Commission Act:

- None in Report 3 (*Agricultural Area Plan*).

References to the Right to Farm (Farm Practices Protection) Act:

- See above ALC description.

References to Water Rights (Canada Water Act, BC Water Act):

- None.

Notes & Observations:

- The Spallumcheen *Agricultural Area Plan* has a section titled “Key Highlights of Spallumcheen Agriculture”, outlining several characteristics of the agriculture industry of Spallumcheen, including:
 - Size of Agricultural Land Base
 - Use of Agricultural Land
 - Economic and Employment Contribution
 - Revenue Characteristics (of Census Farmers)
 - Quality of Resource Base
 - Lot Use & Farm Size Distribution
 - Farm Operators (age statistics & number of)
 - Farm Investment
 - Marketing

Regional District of Central Okanagan *Agricultural Plan* Summary

Regional District of Central Okanagan Statistics:

Population (2006)	162,276 ¹
Jurisdictional Area:	
Regional District of Central Okanagan	303,490 ha
Plan Study Area	not available: see maps
Total Area Farmed (2006)	27,201 ha
Number of Farms (2006)	1,017
ALR	27,305 ha

*

Date of *Agricultural Plan*: June, 2005

Title: *Regional District of Central Okanagan Agricultural Plan*

Length: 55 pages

Prepared by: True Consulting Group, Integra Community Planning Services

Adoption Status:

- Unknown. Not found in council minutes.

Related documents:

- Regional District of Central Okanagan - Agricultural Plan Background Report

Purpose Statement:

- *“to enhance the viability of the agricultural sector in the Regional District by addressing farm viability issues arising from resource potential, diversification opportunities, urbanization conflicts and competition for agricultural land. While it is recognized that there are a broad range of issues and jurisdictions that have an impact upon agriculture, the main focus of this Agricultural Plan will be on those issues that lie within the jurisdiction of the Regional District”.* (1)

Highlights:

- Applies to areas outside of Member Municipalities, mainly consisting of ALR lands.
- *“The purpose of the Plan is to identify what the Regional District can do to encourage agricultural activity within the ALR and to help agriculture compete with other uses for a limited land base.”* (2).

¹ Includes Member Municipalities: City of Kelowna, District of Lake Country, District of West Kelowna, and District of Peachland.

Outlined Issues & Objectives

1. Legislative & Governance Structure

1.1. Strengthening Policy and Governance

Issue: The view of the permanent role of agriculture should be clearly articulated and/or acknowledged through all policy and governance opportunities.

- There is a need to re-affirm the commitment to the long-term preservation of agricultural lands. Rapid growth has created pressure to urbanize, and created conflict at the interface between agricultural and other land uses.
- The Local Government Act provides provisions for Farm Bylaws; standards can be established and enforced, as well as varied based differing farm/agricultural characteristics.
- A more integrated approach, between levels and departments, would provide for a more “seamless” approach to the administration of agriculture.

Objectives: Re-affirm the essential role of the ALR as integral, ensure that major Plans and initiatives of the region reflect the agriculture industry, provide Farm Bylaw control of agricultural activities, to actively participate in all aspects of agricultural planning and development approvals process in the region, working towards integration of agricultural interests, and to ensure that the AAC is both best equipped and informed about agricultural matters.

2. Infrastructure

2.1. Irrigation

Issues: Adequate protection and efficient use of water supplies is necessary to ensure water sources remain viable.

- Climatic change may introduce changes in water availability and/or quantity. Agriculture is only one of many competing interests for water.
- Seasonal low-flow periods may change as a result of climate change.
- There are numerous irrigation districts within the Regional District; no single agency has prepared a strategic plan to address water issues.

Objective: *“Support retention, growth and sustainable development of an agricultural industry that is largely dependent on irrigation.”* (13)

2.2. Roads

Issues: Roads in agricultural areas support farm, local, and through traffic; there is potential for conflict. These same roads are often the only separation between urban and farm land uses.

- Traffic is increasing as regional growth is increasing.
- Expansion of road networks through agricultural areas creates loss and fragmentation of land and increased potential for traffic conflict.
- The Provincial Ministry of Transportation is a principle stakeholder in this issue.

Objective: *“To optimize traffic safety and efficiency of movement in agricultural areas while minimizing the traffic impacts on agricultural lands and agricultural activities.”* (16).

2.3. Sanitary and Storm Sewer

Issue: Opportunities exist to enhance agriculture through liquid waste planning and storm water management planning.

- Liquid waste presents irrigation opportunities, while storm/farm drainage can be improved through management planning. Public education on these matters is crucial to success.

Objective: *“To enhance agricultural opportunities through utility service infrastructure planning.”* (19)

3. Economics

3.1. External Competition

Issue: Local, national, and international agricultural economic change places strain on the Okanagan industry to remain adaptive, competitive, and economically viable.

- Cooperation between organizations and governments is necessary to market, support, and research localised food opportunities.

Objective: *“To assist in maintaining competitive agricultural market conditions in the RDCO, and nurturing an industry that is responsive and adaptive to changing conditions in agricultural product demand.”* (22)

3.2. Costs of Production

Issue: The costs of production (land, labour, supplies, equipment) must remain competitive to agricultural operations in other areas.

- The local economy would benefit from a local suppliers of agricultural inputs.
- Recommendations are provided for increased support of agritourism, heritage awareness, farmer's market activity, festivals, and signage to increase awareness and economic viability of local industries.

Objective: *"To provide local government assistance where feasible to minimize agricultural production costs."* (23)

3.3. Land Costs

Issue: Land costs are high for agricultural land due to the pressure for land for urban growth.

- There is a need to create awareness that ALR land is for agricultural use, and not future urban growth. Cooperation with the ALC and Assessment Office is necessary to create this awareness, and decrease farm land value.

Objective: *"To achieve and maintain land costs for agricultural purposes that permit current and future operations to remain as viable economic interests in the region."* (25)

4. Rural-Urban Fringe

4.1. Edge Permanency

Issue: Separation of urban-rural land uses is necessary to provide clarity and certainty of the role of ALR land.

- Possibilities for the urban side include covenants, land use regulations, DPAs, and road designs.
- Possibilities for the rural side include buffers, farm bylaws, road design, and financial support to farm industry for development.

Objective: *"To develop rural-urban edge conditions in the region that provide clarity, permanency and effectiveness for both agricultural and community development interests."* (26)

4.2. Edge Separation

Issue: Inadequate, ineffective and impermanent buffering provisions between rural and urban areas.

- Buffering is necessary to achieve a sense of separation. DPAs are suggested, as well as covenants, and disclosure, by developers to buyers, of farm activity. Other buffering measures are suggested, as well as the possibility of a farm bylaw.

Objective: *"To develop rural-urban edge conditions that encourage sensitive co-existence of rural-urban use"* (28).

4.3. Farm Practices

Issue: Conflicts between rural and urban communities on matters such as noise, dust, odour, trespass, vandalism and theft.

- The Farm Practices Protection Act establishes the rights of farms, however efforts are needed to raise awareness of these rights.
- Efforts to improve edge permanency will strengthen this awareness.
- F.P.P.A. encourages use of bylaws to support agriculture.

Objective: *"To improve awareness of farm practices and the rights and responsibilities of the farm and non-farm sectors."* (30)

4.4. Non Farm Rural Development

Issue: Rural settings are attractive to non-farm residential uses.

- There is significant demand to build rural estates on small ALR parcels; this type of development fragments agricultural land, often rendering it non-farmable.

Objective: *"Minimize the impacts of new estate residences in the ALR on lands with farming potential."* (31)

5. Environment

5.1. Environmental Farm Practices

Issue: Support of sound environmental farm practices, that do not adversely effect other areas.

- The Environmental Farm Plan program is in place to assist farmers., including financial assistance.
- Issues arise surrounding insect control, disposal of wood-cuttings & organic material, and weed/insect control (as well as enforcement of).

Objective: Encourage minimal adverse environmental impacts as a result of farm practices, ensure cost-effect benefits of insect control, ensure environmentally-safe waste disposal, adapt to climate change, provide for regulatory control over abandoned farmland (to protect adjacent farmland properties).

5.2. Recreation Activities & Corridors

Issue: A growing population and tourism market generates continued pressure for recreation opportunities.

- Recreation on farmland is often assumed, demand increases with population increase.
- Increases opportunities for the spread of weeds, litter, vandalism, and trespassing.
- Recreational opportunities can contribute to agriculture, through agri-tourism.
- Planning is necessary to minimize impact of recreation corridors.

Objective: Limit encroachment of recreation on agricultural land, avoid/mitigate disruption of farming activities, increase public awareness & education, incorporate recreation corridor planning with general planning & buffering for agriculture.

6. Education

6.1. Public Awareness of Agriculture

Issue: *“Commitment to the protection or agricultural land needs to be strengthened by broad public awareness of the value of local agriculture.”*

- 78% of residents are urban - it is necessary to have continuing efforts to heighten local awareness of agriculture. Reinforcement of the value of ALR is necessary as well.

Objective: *“Maintain and enhance efforts to heighten awareness of local agriculture and the Agricultural Land Reserve.”* (40)

6.2. Farm Succession & Research

Issue: A process is needed to ensure that farm succession and introduction of new farm practices results in an improvement of agriculture, and the passing of rural codes of conduct.

- There is an aging farming population in the RDCO. There is a need to maintain the knowledge base, and to explore new opportunities to improve agriculture. Changing global patterns (such as fuel prices) may create new opportunities, knowledge will benefit this possibility.

Objective: *“Ensure continued and/or improved productivity from the agricultural land base during changes in land ownership or changes in agricultural production”* (41).

7. Industry Support

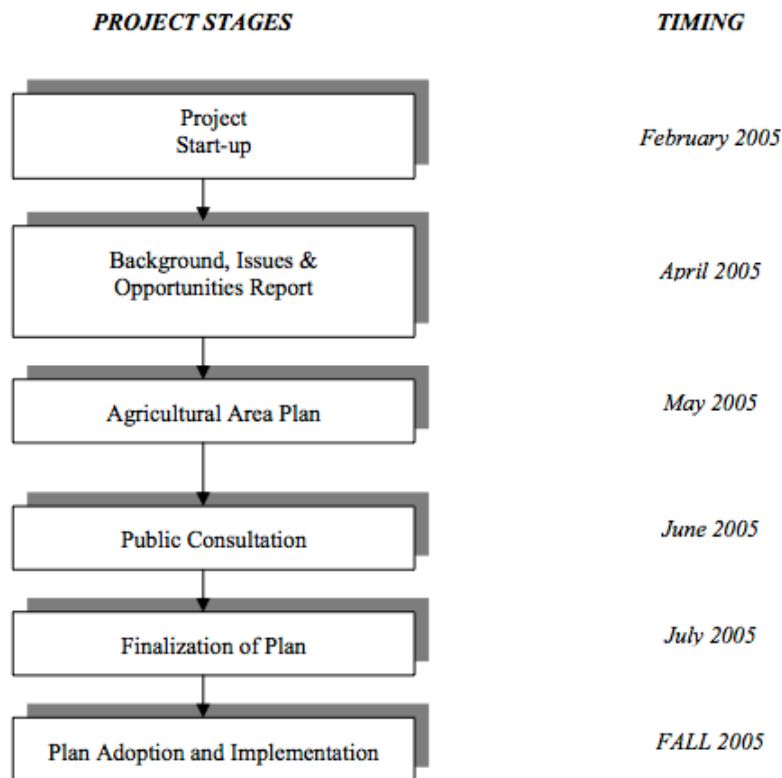
7.1. Agricultural Support Officer

Issue: *“The farm community lacks local resources to assist with the promotion and enhancement of agricultural opportunities.”*

- Additional support includes business planning, educational opportunities, improved access to information and avenues to liaise with other agricultural agencies and institutions.

Objective: *“Establish an Agricultural Support Officer position as a pilot project within the organization of the Economic Development function.”* (44)

Development Process/Timeline:



Regional District of Central Okanagan OCP Supporting Statements¹:

The AAP outlines four distinct areas within the district that are covered by the plan: Ellison, North Westside, Westside & Joe Rich. See maps for details.

1. Ellison Official Community Plan

- “Support the ‘Agricultural Plan” contained The intention of the plan is to determine actions and policies within the mandate of a Regional District that are supportive of agriculture.” (14-3)
- The Ellison OCP contains an extensive Agricultural Policy section.
- The Ellison OCP echoes many of the policies outlined in the RDCO Agricultural Plan, including:
 - Support and acknowledgement of agriculture as an important basis for economic stability & preservation of agriculture within the district.
 - Consultation with the ALC.
 - Support of secondary activities, limited residential development, development and expansion of agricultural activities, and efficient interface planning.

2. Westside Official Community Plan.

- The Westside OCP pre-dates the RDCO Agricultural Plan - there is no direct reference to the AAP besides from an objective to “Develop” an ‘agricultural plan’.
- There is an extensive section on agricultural policies, containing many of the objectives contained within the RDCO Agricultural plan, including:
 - Support and acknowledgement of agriculture as an important basis for economic stability & preservation of agriculture within the district.
 - Consultation with the ALC
 - Support development, improvement and expansion of agriculture, as well as secondary activities that contribute to farming income.
 - Ensure efficient interface planning. (14-4).

3. North Westside Official Community Plan
 - The Westside OCP (1999) pre-dates the RDCO Agricultural Plan - there is no direct reference to the AAP.
 - The OCP outlines a number of agricultural objectives, including:
 - Protect & maintain economic viability of the agricultural sector.
 - Support buffering & screening of agricultural land
 - Support the ALC
 - Preserve large rural & agricultural parcels.
4. Joe Rich Land Use Bylaw
 - *“Support the policies and activities of the [RDCO] in support of farming as an activity and a business, such as the Regional District Agricultural Plan and the recommendations it contains, the Regional District Agricultural Advisory Committee, and the Regional District Agricultural Support Officer.*
 - The land use bylaw states one objective: *“ Identify, protect and preserve land of good agricultural quality.”* (4-9).

AAC Status:

- Ongoing. Last meeting on April 13, 2010.
<http://www.regionaldistrict.com/departments/planning/planning_pubcon.aspx>

References to Agricultural Land Commission Act:

- Brief mention of ALC buffering guidelines (to minimize edge conflict). (27)

References to the Right to Farm (Farm Practices Protection) Act:

- Acknowledgement of the rights of farmers as a result of the F.P.P.A. (30)
- A recommendation to ensure consistency between noise by-laws and the F.P.P.A. regarding the use of bird scare devices (within section 5.2: Rural-Urban Fringe) (29)
- Education information that should be provided on the farm industry & legislation. (Section 8.2: Education) (43)
- The ability to enact farm bylaws is acknowledged. (8)

References to Water Rights (Canada Water Act, BC Water Act):

- None.
- References to multiple jurisdictions and lack of joint strategic water plan (Section 3.1: Infrastructure) (14).

District of Summerland *Agricultural Plan* Summary

Summerland Statistics¹:

Population (2006)	10,828
Jurisdictional Area:	
Regional District	7,442 ha
Plan Study Area	
Total Area Farmed (2006)	2,605 ha
% of Farmland:	24.06%
Number of Farms (2006)	248
ALR	2,804 ha

Date of AAP: July 6,2008

Title: *District of Summerland Agricultural Plan: "Time to Decide"*

Length: 67 pages

Prepared by: District of Summerland, Agricultural Advisory Committee, and a team of consultants.

Adoption Status:

- Adopted by council resolution. Bylaw 2000-342, OCP Amendment, officially added the AAP to the OCP as a Secondary Plan.

Related documents:

- Background Report #1: Summerland Agriculture Today: Resources, Economics, and Policy.
- Background Report #2: Summerland Agriculture Today: Community Interests.
 - Neither report is available on the WWW, however, each is summarized in the appendix section of the AAP document.

Purpose Statement:

- *"The primary purpose of the Agricultural Plan is to support, promote, and enhance farming within Summerland. It is also expected that the plan will advance public knowledge of the effects of urban activities on normal farming practices, and the potential impacts of farming activities on urban neighbours. This Plan will provide methods and policies which will protect and enhance the urban/rural and farmland interface."* (10)

¹ District of Summerland Agriculture in Brief. 2009. Province of British Columbia. Ministry of Agriculture and Lands.

Highlights:

- “... agriculture still plays a central role in [Summerland’s] economy and landscape.” (5)
- “The District is committed to protecting and enhancing agriculture, and ensuring its viability where possible.” (5)
- “The vision for agriculture in the District of Summerland is that of an industry that is sustainable both economically and environmentally. Improved cooperation between urban/rural land uses and farming activities is also sought. The plan is to achieve this objective through the realization of four goals:
 1. Creating the environment to foster an economically viable and sustainable industry.
 2. Fostering harmony between farmland and urban/rural development.
 3. Encouraging participative planning for sustainable agriculture.
 4. Creating the environment to foster an environmentally sustainable agriculture.” (6)

Outlined Issues:

- Concerns over the availability of land, water, and labour for agricultural production, including:
 - Competition for agricultural land,
 - Encroachment on agricultural land,
 - Degradation of farm land,
 - Viability of small land parcels for agricultural use,
 - Farmland and urban/rural development conflict issues,
 - Temporary farm worker housing becoming rental housing,
 - Bylaws surrounding the issue of buffering and covenants,
 - The viability of small parcels of land
 - The degradation of farmland (especially small parcels) due to non-farmer ownership.
 - The cost, supply, availability, quality and competition for water.
 - Supplying information about droughts, and water availability.
- Concerns with respect to the financial viability of their industry;
- Concerns with respect to boundaries between agricultural and non-agricultural land use;
- Issues of awareness, understanding, and support between the agricultural and non-agricultural residents of the District of Summerland;
- Potential opportunities for niche marketing, small scale food processing, development of a centre of excellence for sustainable agriculture, and nurturing new agri-food and agricultural ventures, as well as wine-tourism.

Objectives & Desired Outcomes:

1. Land Use Strategies:
 - 1.1. Compatible Strategic Land-Use Plan
 - Objective: “Ensure land is available for agricultural use.” (12)
 - Clear and coherent land use plans within the OCP, such as an urban growth boundary, sending a message to all about the intent of agricultural land.
 - 1.2. Temporary Farm Worker Housing
 - Objective: “Minimize conflict from secondary housing on the farms within the District and minimize the impact of temporary farm worker housing on agricultural lands.” (17)
 - Temporary farm worker accommodations often become permanent rental housing, creating conflict with adjacent lands; farmers should be encouraged to provide accommodations for workers off-site
 - 1.3. Buffers/setbacks adjacent to agricultural land
 - Objective: “Promote effective buffers between agricultural and non-agricultural land to reduce conflicts.” (19)
 - Conflict between land uses arises in both directions; buffers are necessary to mitigate conflict; and can be enforced through bylaw and covenant on new developments.
 - 1.4. Zoning for Clean Agri-Food Industrial Park

- Objective: *“Create an area within the District to facilitate value-added opportunities, and spin-offs from research and development.”* (20)
 - Provide an area, adjacent or in close proximity to highway frontage, for establishment of commercial enterprises, food processors and other agricultural value-added enterprises.
- 1.5. Parcel Amalgamation
- Objective: *“Promote consolidation of farms into larger, more diversified operations.”* (23)
 - A lack of scale economy and increased exposure to financial risk are arising from the Districts high number of small (less than 10 acres) farms. Large and diversified operations have a better probability of survival over the long term.
- 1.6. Farm Residential Footprints
- Objective: *“Encourage the preservation of farmland within the district for farm use.”* (25)
 - Small farm properties are attractive to non-farmer owners. “Residential Footprint” policies will encourage buildings on farmland that are conducive to the future use of the land for farming.
2. Water Use Strategies:
- 2.1. Water Supply/Demand Risk Assessment
- Objective: *“A better understanding of the risk to the water supply with each new development in the District.”* (27)
 - A comprehensive risk assessment study will generate consistent policies that encourage farmers to invest in their operations, as well as assist in better decision making for new development.
- 2.2. Source Water Protection Plan
- Objective: *“Better management of risks to the water supply in the source watershed.”* (30)
 - Identifying risks in the watershed will allow for the development of protective policies.
- 2.3. Drought Management Plan
- Objective: *“Establish a clear operational plan for the event of a multi-year drought affecting the District’s water supply.”* (32)
 - Tools to manage water supply during drought are necessary. Installation of water meters will assist of water use management.
- 2.4. Improved Water Use Information for Farmers
- Objective: *“Empower farmers to make better decision about the water resources they have available to them.”* (34)
 - Education about the importance of efficient water use will lead to reduce water usage.
- 2.5. Comprehensive Strategic Water Infrastructure Plan
- Objective: *“Provide better long-term assurances to the supply and cost of water within the District for agricultural users.”* (37).
 - Reassure farmers about the viability of their operations resulting from the supply and cost of water.
3. Awareness, Understanding and Support Strategies:
- 3.1. Increased Awareness:
- Objective: *“Increase the awareness and sensitivity of residents and visitors to Summerland’s agricultural sector.”* (39).
 - A lack of awareness is the first condition for potential conflict - an agricultural awareness program can ensure all residents and visitors are clearly aware of agriculture’s presence.
- 3.2. Increased Understanding
- Objective: *“More harmonious relations between urban and rural residents through an improved understanding of agriculture in the District by non-farming residents and visitors.”* (42)
 - Understanding is the product of education; knowledge by all of the F.P.P.A and the activities required by farmers to operate will assist in the viability of agriculture and relations between urban and rural.
- 3.3. Increased support
- Objective: *“Provide an improved sense of support for agriculture in the District.”* (44)
 - A Farmers’ Institute is being recommended as a forum for the agricultural sector. The goal is agriculturally inclusive planning processes.
4. Improving Financial Return Strategies:
- 4.1. Management Syndicates
- Objective: *“Recognize strategies which farmers can implement independent of the District to achieve the goal of economic viability through improved financial returns.”* (45)

- A common commodity syndicate, of perhaps 20 to 40 individual farmers, retaining a full-time agrologist can be successful in collaborating on common marketing and distribution.
 -
5. Better Farmland and Urban/Rural Relations Strategies:
- 5.1. Environmental Farm Plans
- Objective: *“Promote strategies that assist farmers in becoming more environmentally sensitive and help to achieve improved harmonious farmland and urban/rural relations.”* (46)
 - E.F.P.s can help farmers reduce degradation to their land, mitigate conflicts, and promote environmental sensitivity.
- 5.2. Sterile Insect Release Program Participation
- Objective: *“Facilitate programs that benefit farmers and are environmentally sensitive.”* (48)
 - This is a cross-jurisdictional program to control the codling moth populations (to the point where no additional control interventions are required.)

NOTE: All strategies in this summary and in the *Agricultural Plan* are recommendations only, provided by the consultant, the AAC, and other contributors to the farm plan.

Development Process/Timeline:

- Agricultural inventory of soils, water & climatic data was conducted for the District.
- History of Agriculture explored.
- Economic impacts of agriculture assessed.
- Report #1 released.
- Public focus groups and open houses held.
- Field tours with the AAC.
- Interviews with individuals.
- Report #2
- Further detail is unavailable through the WWW.

District of Summerland OCP Supporting Statements¹:

- The Summerland AAP is listed within the OCP as an official “Secondary Plan”, to *“provide more specific direction for the areas covered therein”*. (121)
- Agriculture policies in the OCP state that *“District policies are to: Implement the strategies as described within any adopted agricultural plan for the community.”* (33)
-
- Under Section 5.1.3.4., Residential Policies, the OCP states that *“Developments abutting lands designated as part of the A.L.R. will be required to create a landscaped buffer designed to minimize conflicts with normal agricultural operations.”*
- Other strong agricultural policies are laid out in Section 5.1.1.4 of the Summerland OCP, including:
 1. Confine residential development on ALR land to farm residences
 2. Develop a farm residence ‘Home Plate’ policy.
 3. Encourage consolidation of legal parcels to encourage more efficient agricultural operations.
 4. Promote the inclusion of productive agricultural land into the ALR
 5. Engage the Federal Government’s Agricultural Research Facility
 6. Continue to accommodate a Downtown farmers market to provide economic opportunities.
 7. Support the development of agricultural-related industries.
 8. Support agri-tourism and direct farm marketing as secondary uses (that comply with ALC guidelines & policies).
 9. Support new road, utility and communications corridors that minimize impact on agricultural operations.
 10. Ensure new urban land developments provide adequate buffers to minimize conflict with agricultural operations.
 11. Encourage retention of natural areas and unique landforms which benefit the community’s overall character, environmental well being and agricultural operations.

12. Implement the strategies as described within any adopted agricultural plan for the community.

AAC Status:

- Defunct. Last meeting January 22, 2008.
- Summerland has an APC, Its terms of Reference are to include 2 agricultural representatives. This committee hears all all development related applications, included those regarding agricultural or ALR land. Recommendations to council include input from the agricultural community. (See Summerland Bylaw # 94-002, Advisory Planning Commission Bylaw).

References to Agricultural Land Commission Act:

- Brief mention of ALC buffer standards being “inadequate, expensive and utilizing too much land.”

References to the Right to Farm (Farm Practices Protection) Act:

- Mention of the relationship of the F.P.P.A and the communities understanding of agricultural practices; the Act can help to educate the general public when combined with education programs.

References to Water Rights (Canada Water Act, BC Water Act):

- None.

The District of Salmon Arm¹ Agricultural Area Plan Summary

City of Salmon Arm Statistics²:

Population (2006)	16,012
Jurisdictional Area:	
City	18,877 ha
Plan Study Area	~ 7,800 ha
ALR in Study Area	~ 5,900 ha
Total Area Farmed (2006)	4,171 ha
% of Farmland:	22%
Number of Farms (reporting) (2006)	181
ALR (City)	6,148

Date of Document: June 2004

Title: *District of Salmon Arm Agricultural Area Plan*

Length: 42 pages

Prepared by: True Consulting Group

Adoption Status:

- Approved in principle by council resolution on June 28, 2004. (Councillor Flynn opposed). Recommended that council draft an amendment to the OCP to make reference to the AAP².
- The City of Salmon Arm is currently in its final stages of drafting a new OCP; further inclusion of the AAP is possible.

Related documents:

- District of Salmon Arm Agricultural Area Plan Background Report
 - This report is divided into the following sections:
 - I. Introduction
 - Contains both the context and process of the Agricultural Area Plan.
 - II. Regional Context
 - Outlines the history of agriculture in the area, as well as provides a profile of the region.
 - III. Legislative & Policy Context
 - Outlines and describes local, regional, provincial, federal, and global policies and organizations, and how they relate to agriculture in Salmon Arm.

¹ The District of Salmon Arm became the City of Salmon Arm on May 15, 2005.

² City of Salmon Arm Agricultural Overview. 2009. Province of British Columbia. Ministry of Agriculture and Lands. <http://www.agf.gov.bc.ca/resmgmt/sf/Publications.htm#agstats>. Retrieved June 8, 2010.

IV. Agricultural Economy

- Provides an economic profile of the area, including types of farms, parcelization, individual land/farm management practices, financial analysis, spin-off benefits

I. Maps

- The document contains numerous maps, including study area, Canada Land Inventory Agriculture Capability Classification, primary land use within the ALR, planning areas, and primary agricultural land use activities.

Purpose Statement:

- No specific “purpose” statement, each section of the report describes an issue and specific objectives.

Highlights:

- *No descriptive section in the document.*

Outlined Issues:

NOTE: Each section of the Salmon Arm AAP names and briefly describes an agricultural issue, provides a brief objective, as well as an in depth discussion (containing background information, history, as well as current and future policies), and a list of recommendations. Included here is a summary of the issues and objectives, with brief descriptions as necessary.

1. Rural - Urban Fringe Issues

1.1. Intensive Agricultural Activities.

Issue: How to address the potential impacts on associated air quality and other environmental conditions.

- Outlines inconsistencies between municipal and provincial policy, regarding setbacks for agricultural land.

Objective: *“Minimize any conflict within Salmon Arm regarding impact on the broader community arising from the pursuit of intensive agricultural operations.”*

1.2. Agricultural Odours.

Issue: Odours caused by agricultural operations, may also include noise and dust issues.

- Discusses issues around odours, stipulates that farmers are protected by the “Right to Farm” Act. Makes suggestions to minimize conflict and create awareness of farm practices.

Objective: *“Minimize community conflicts arising from the presence of odours or other disturbances created by agricultural activities, while ensuring normal farm practices ... are not restricted.”*

1.3. Pesticide and Herbicide Application

Issue: Community concern over the application of pesticides in agricultural areas, and the potential impact on food products and the environment.

- Similar to above odour issues. Recommends for increased capitalization of new farm management practices.

Objective: *“Minimize the potential for any adverse impact on food products and environmental conditions as a result of the application of herbicides and pesticides on agricultural lands”.*

1.4. Rural-Urban Buffering

Issue: The need for establishing adequate buffering at the interface between farming operations and urban development.

- Outlines & discusses current policy (mostly provincial) regarding agricultural buffers. Outlines Salmon Arm zoning bylaw (regarding setbacks, fencing & parcel sizes). Recommends adoption of DPAs for growth areas, covenant titles, and the continuation of *“minimal creation of new urban-rural edge conditions”*.

Objective: *“Minimize adverse impacts , along those edge conditions where urban growth occurs near or adjacent to agricultural activities.”*

1.5. Traffic in Agricultural Areas

Issue: Conflict arises between farm traffic and through traffic on roads in agricultural areas.

- Recommends signage, public, limits on residential development feeder roads.

Objective: *“Optimize traffic safety and efficiency of movement in agricultural areas while minimizing the traffic impacts on agricultural activities.”*

2. Fish & Wildlife Issues

2.1. Fish Habitat Protection

Issue: Streams and ditches that irrigate and drain agricultural lands may also be considered fish-bearing streams.

- Discusses restrictions on farming activities due to drainage streams doubling as fish habitats. Recommends riparian improvement, funding assistance from the Environmental Farm Plan Program, and review of riparian setback regulations.

Objective: *“Reduce the impacts from agricultural operations on fish habitat, and balance the needs of the farming community with the requirements for fish habitat protection”.*

2.2. Wildlife Habitat

Issue: Agricultural lands present opportunities for wildlife, which can be harmful to crops.

- Acknowledges that wildlife management is primarily a provincial and federal responsibility. Recommends working with multiple levels of government and assisting farmers (financially) to best mitigate problems.

Objective: *“Minimize the impacts of local wildlife on agricultural activities.”*

3. Utility Issues

3.1. Irrigation

Issue: Improved irrigation will enhance agricultural capacity in Salmon Arm.

- Discusses the option of a multi-user irrigation system. Many farmers are historically willing to partially fund additional irrigation. Provides history and examples of crop loss due to drought and poor growing season conditions. Recommends opportunities for infrastructure funding, and the exploration of groundwater supply studies.

Objective: *“Explore opportunities for improved irrigation, to ensure greater capacity of production; provide for a broader range of crops; and, improve dependability of crop yields.”*

3.2. Sanitary Sewer

Issue: Liquid Waste Management Planning will enhance agriculture.

- Explores ideas of using wastewater for irrigation. Recommends further public education.

Objective: *“Enhance agricultural opportunities consistent with the objectives of the District of Salmon Arm Liquid Waste Management Plan.”*

4. Recreation Issues

4.1. Linear Parks in Agricultural Areas

Issue: Park users traversing agricultural areas can create conflict between the two interests.

- Recommends that the District [City] ensure signage is in place, and notify farmers to accommodate community planned activities.

Objective: *“Optimize linear park opportunities that traverse both the urban and rural parts of the community, while addressing public safety issues and minimizing any disruptive impact such use may have on agricultural properties and practices.”*

4.2. Commercial Recreation (Agri-Tourism)

Issue: Identify appropriate and viable opportunities for development of commercial recreation amenities.

Objective: *“Encourage development of additional commercial recreation opportunities for resident and visitor use in Salmon Arm’s agricultural areas”* to provide new revenue potential for both farmers and the community.

4. Other Issues

5.1. Farm Bylaw Implementation

Issue: Consideration of the merits and impact of implementing a Farm Bylaw.

- Discusses the Farm Bylaw provisions in the Local Government Act. Recommends future consideration of the establishment of a Farm Bylaw in Salmon Arm.

Objective: To improve overall agricultural conditions and provide clear direction within the agricultural community (with regard to operations, building and equipment requirements, and siting of stored materials).

5.2. Advocacy

Issue: The agricultural industry could benefit from effective forums for the discussion of agricultural issues.

- There is no effective and/or organized forum for the discussion of agricultural issues. Recommends the creation of an Agricultural Advisory Committee.

Objective: *“Develop opportunities for agricultural interests and issues to be discussed and be represented.”*

5.3. Agricultural Economic Enhancement

Issue: *“Changing local and global conditions place continual strain on the ability of agricultural businesses to remain adaptive, competitive and economically healthy.”*

- Acknowledges the importance of agriculture’s contribution to the local economy (as outlined in the Background Report). Suggests numerous economic initiatives to bolster the health of the agricultural economy in Salmon Arm.

Objective: *“Enhance the on-going economic health of agricultural businesses in the District of Salmon Arm, and ensure they remain an essential and integral part of the community.”*

5.4. Non-Farm Rural Development

Issue: Rural areas surrounding the city are attractive for non-farm development.

- Points out that subdivision of rural lands is in contravention of the UGB. Discusses possible development policies within agricultural areas.

Objective: *“Minimize the impact of non-farm rural development on agricultural lands.”*

5.5. Agricultural Land Commission Delegation

Issue: The ALC has legislative authority to delegate limited decision making authority to local government.

- Suggests that decision making regarding ALR should stay with the ALC.

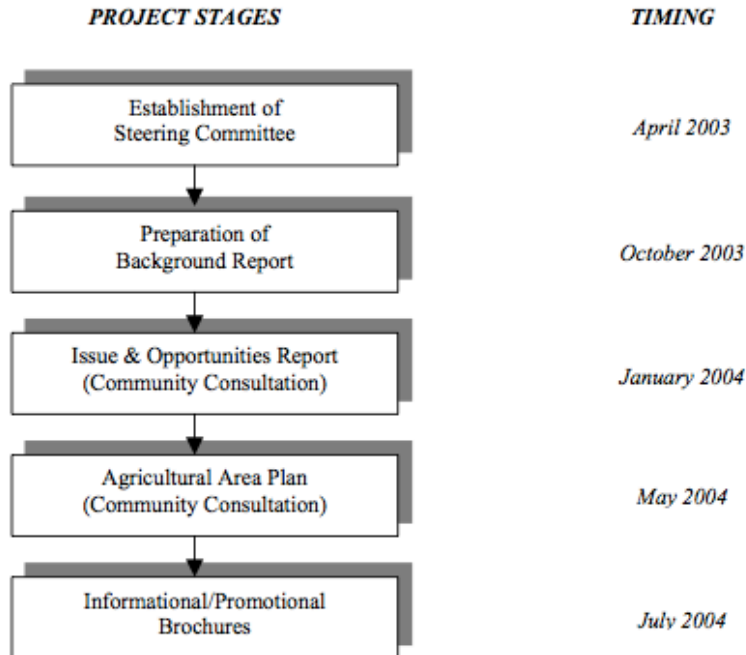
Objective: *“Consider the potential role of the ALC Delegation Agreement in relation to the District of Salmon Arm Agricultural Plan.”*

Objectives & Desired Outcomes:

- See above.

Development Process/Timeline:

1.2 Planning Process



City of Salmon Arm OCP Supporting Statements:

- None. The *District of Salmon Arm OCP (2002)* predates the Agricultural Area Plan; the only direct mention is an “Implementation Action” to consider the development of an Agricultural Area Plan.
- Section 4 (Page 30), titled “Rural and Agricultural”, in the *District of Salmon Arm OCP (2002)* deals with the city’s agricultural policies (30).
- These policies support the continuance of agriculture and discourage subdivision of agricultural lands.
- These policies are not explicit nor specific in nature; no policies addressing common AAP subjects are breached (ie economic development, irrigation/drainage, traffic, buffering, etc).
- The *Agricultural Area Plan Background Report* contains an excellent summary of these policies.
- Salmon Arm has an “urban containment boundary” in place, which closely follows the boundaries of ALR land (10)

AAC Status:

- It appears as though the Steering Committee is no longer active, since the completion of the AAP. “Agricultural Advisory Committee” Searches on the City’s website returned no current/recent hits.

AAP References to Agricultural Land Commission Act:

- Suggests that an AAC can function as a referral agency on applications under the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* (30).
- Agri-tourism accomodations that are allowed as per the *Act* (26)

References to the Right to Farm (Farm Practices Protection) Act:

- As described in 1.2 - Agricultural Odours.

References to Water Rights (Canada Water Act, BC Water Act):

- None.

Regional District of Comox Valley¹ Agricultural Plan Summary

Regional District of Comox Valley Statistics:

Population (2006)	58,824
Jurisdictional Area:	
Regional District	234,427 ha
Plan Study Area	160,032 ha
Total Area Farmed (2001)	9633 ha
% of Farmland:	0.04%
Number of Farms (2001)	~ 300
ALR	~ 20,000 ha

Date of plan: November 25, 2002

Title: *Phase 2 - Comox Valley Agricultural Plan - "Close to Home"*

Length: 48 pages.

Prepared by: Qu'West Consulting Services, From the Ground Up, & Groundworks Strategic Marketing Services.

Adoption Status:

- Endorsed by council resolution on February 24, 2003, under recommendation from the Community Planning Committee.

Related documents:

- Phase 1 Report 1: History and Resources - July 28, 2002
- Phase 1 Report 2: Issues and Opportunities - April 10, 2002
- Comox Valley Agricultural Plan Maps¹

Purpose Statement:

- *"To further the development of socially, culturally, environmentally and economically sustainable farming."*(1)

Highlights:

- *"The four key goals of the plan are to:"*
 1. *"Identify the current agricultural situation in the Comox Valley."*
 2. Educate governments and the public with regards to agriculture in the Comox Valley

¹ In 2008, the Provincial Government re-adjusted regional district boundaries: Comox-Strathcona Regional District was split to form 2 new districts: Comox Valley Regional District, and Strathcona Regional District. Although the AAP was originally drafted for the Comox-Strathcona Regional District, the "plan area" only covers part of what is now Comox Valley Regional District. See attached maps for details.

3. Identify relationships between agricultural and other land uses, to foster and promote healthy relationships between land uses.
 4. Develop/write an AAP that *“furthers the development of socially/culturally, environmentally and economically sustainable farming in the plan area”*. (3)
- *“A Plan is an agenda for change. In this case, change is complex because agriculture is complex.”* (7)
 - AAP Vision Statement:
 - *“Agriculture in the Comox Valley will be a growing sector of the local economy, with a mix of small, medium and large scale enterprises, focused on regional and local markets. The Valley’s farms will provide a diversity of quality agricultural products. Farmers will be recognized for their wise stewardship of land and water resources and the Valley’s agricultural industry will be recognized for the important role it plays in the community.”* (8)

Outlined Issues:

Land Use Issues:

1. Agricultural Production and Wetland Protection
 - 30% of soils in Comox Valley need improved drainage systems for optimum productivity.
 - Fisheries policies restrict the possibility of wetland drainage.
2. Agricultural Compatibility with Wild Fish Production
 - Federal and provincial agencies place greater importance on fish and fish habitat protection than agricultural needs.
3. Agricultural Impact on Water Quality
 - Reduced water quality as a result of farm runoff, composting operations, and cattle watering is of increasing public concern.
4. Composting and Waste Management
 - Composting, both as a service to farmers and from farm uses, causes environmental concerns, nuisances such as odour, and provincial regulations place restrictions on composting, making it difficult for compost operations.
5. Rural Urban Interface
 - There has not been a priority place on adequate buffers to mitigate nuisances such as odour, noise, trespassing (human and pet), and litter.
 - Agricultural and urban expansion has resulted in conflict, without proper buffer separation.
 - These issues are the result of lack of guidelines or regulations requiring separation between uses.
 - Strategies are necessary to avoid creating new problems, as well as address existing problems.
6. Accuracy of Sensitive Habitat Atlas
 - Consistency between provincial and regional/municipal policies has resulted in a misplaced allocation of responsibility of riparian areas (more so on the agricultural community rather than the community as a whole)
7. Greenways and Trails
 - Greenways are of less concern to farmers than trails.
 - Trails are proposed to be developed adjacent to agricultural lands through the region.
8. Flooding caused by Upland Development
 - Storm water runoff is increasing as a result of urbanization; this runoff passes through agricultural areas.
 - Flooding and residual water can cause crop damage while reducing growth rates, yields and damaging soils.
9. Poor Soil Drainage
 - Improved drainage can increase land productivity, and have beneficial financial effects.

Economic Issues:

1. Changing Farm Size:
 - Single product farms are declining in number but remaining farms are increasing in size.
 - Mixed use farms are increasing in numbers.
 - Mixed use farms that concentrate on local market opportunities presents an economic opportunity for the region.
2. Farm Business Succession

- Younger generations are either not interested or can't afford taking over farms.
- Expansion of farms to non-family employees creates management challenges.
- Fragmentation business and land is not desirable.

Marketing Issues/Opportunities:

1. Food Self Sufficiency
 - Only 10% of food consumed on island is produced on island.
 - Expanding food-self sufficiency is a desired outcome, and may possibly be achieved through better management, higher valued crops, better soil fertility, and improved irrigation and drainage.
2. New Food, Industrial and Agro Forestry Products
 - Local, regional and global markets and opportunities are continually evolving.
 - Awareness of emerging opportunities, as well as evaluation of these possibilities, is a challenge.
3. Local Marketing of Farm Products and Market Research
 - Opportunities for local marketing are unclear; research is necessary.
4. Marketing of Farm production opportunities
 - There are numerous parcels of all sizes throughout study area that are not in agricultural use.
 - Research needs to identify potential clients, information necessary for them, and an information delivery method.
5. On-Farm Processing
 - There isn't enough volume of any one product to justify local large scale processing
 - Value-added products & small scale production need to be encouraged.
 - There is no regularly accessible commercial kitchen facility in the Valley for local small scale producers.
6. Promotion of Local Products
 - There is not information base in the Comox Valley that allows for those interested in purchasing local products to find out what is available, at what quantity and price.
7. Agricultural Awareness/Cultural Activities
 - The agricultural sector must make more effort to go directly to the public, rather than vice-versa.
 - Farm tours/open houses should be encouraged and accommodated.

Policy Issues/Opportunities

1. Access to Water for Irrigation
 - Rights to surface water are allocated through licensing.
 - Limits for water removal are refined based on the needs of fisheries, and prioritized to that during the driest season.
 - Off-stream storage of water is very expensive
2. Food Safety
 - Local sale of meat products does not require federal inspection.
 - Sale outside of local markets, ie GVRD or CRD, requires federal inspection; there is no inspection facility in the region and upgrades/renovations to existing facilities is costly.

Producer Issues/Opportunities

1. Producer Training & Agri-tourism
 - Farmers need to become more involved with processing and marketing to improve access to local markets.
 - Comox Valley enjoys a healthy tourism industry, however there is room for expansion, especially with expanded airline service now in place.
2. Farm Labour
 - The availability and quality of local labour to assist farm operations is an ongoing concern for farm businesses.

Infrastructure Issues/Opportunities

- Improvements to agricultural infrastructure can potentially reduce input and marketing costs.
- A key issue is finding investors or the capital to develop infrastructure.

Objectives & Desired Outcomes:

NOTE: All strategies in this summary and in the agricultural plan are recommendations only, provided by the consultant, the AAC, and other contributors to the farm plan. Following is a summary of the “objectives”, and “desired outcomes”.

The Comox Valley *Agricultural Plan* divides objectives into 6 broad categories, each containing specific objectives, each with their own set of actions and desired outcomes.

1. Water Management:

1.1. Objective: Improve access to irrigation water sources for agriculture.

- Desired Outcomes: Resolution of water management issues, improved cooperation, improved community awareness, increased number of irrigation systems, re-use of urban “waste-water”, improved access to groundwater, possible on farm water storage. Watershed planning is a key action.

1.2. Objective: Improve drainage infrastructure for agriculture.

- Desired Outcomes: Improved surface water drainage, greater & improved access to surface water for irrigation, reduced impact of urban runoff. Storm water management and watershed management are key actions.

1.3. Objective: Improve the environmental resource data base and mapping.

- Desired Outcomes: Improved accuracy of GIS mapping for planning, reduced conflict over resource use and management. Will assist in watershed planning.

2. Land Management:

2.2. Objective: Protect the agricultural land base.

- Desired Outcomes: Retain the ALR land base through more and improved localised decision-making and improved communication between Regional District and ALC.

2.3. Objective: Develop management plans, policies and programs to support agricultural development.

- Desired Outcomes: Reduced farm/non-farm conflict, improved “urban edge” policies, improved income generation/business opportunities in rural area, improved environmental protection in rural areas, as well as increased farmer education/awareness, as well as rural/urban resident education and awareness.

2.4. Objective: Develop planning initiatives to reduce the potential for land use conflict.

- Desired Outcomes: A local mediator/panel, improved awareness and management of nuisance issues, improved awareness of nuisance sources and reduced conflict with farmers.

3. Agricultural/Environmental Stewardship

3.2. Objective: Develop and support plans and programs for environmental stewardship.

- Improved environmental awareness, wildlife habitats, use of Environmental Farm Plans, watershed protection, reduced cost of environmental protection, reduced risk of water contamination. Provide compensation to those who set aside land for environmental purposes.

4. Agricultural Opportunities

4.2. Objective: Expand agricultural business opportunities and farm incomes.

- Desired Outcomes: Establish an Agricultural Development Commission, providing a forum for discussion, debate and business development opportunities. Improve access to/awareness of information, and reduce farmer input costs. Support infrastructure development, retention of the Oyster River Research Farm, increased food self sufficiency, production opportunity, and potential to expand certain sectors.

5. Food Security, Market Development, Safety, Quality and Security

5.2. Objective: Increase agriculture’s contribution to the economy of the Comox Valley.

- Desired Outcomes: Expansion of market opportunities, research, local marketing, a “Centre for Innovation”, improved linkages to other business grounds, expanded island-wide marketing,

regulations to assist economic development, skills development, food safety confidence, expansion of local processing.

6. Agricultural Awareness

6.2. Objective: Improve community support for farmers and local production and to enhance agriculture's importance in the Region.

- Desired Outcomes: Increased public awareness through committees, campaigns, classroom education, workshops ("Food for thought"), maintenance of the AAC, continue the "Fall Fair" & increase Farmer's market support, improve signage, assist agri-tourism initiatives

NOTE: The *Agricultural Plan* lists several indicators and timelines for measurement and execution of these desired outcomes.

Comox Valley Regional District OCP Supporting Statements:

- None. The Rural Comox Valley OCP pre-dates the AAP, and does not have any specific references to the AAP.

Selected Rural Comox Valley OCP Agricultural Policies :

- " *Local government and senior government agencies shall be encouraged to develop a regional plan for agriculture in consultation with the farming community and the Regional District.*" (29)
- " *The economic importance of a sustainable agriculture industry to the Comox Valley shall be recognized and supported.*" (14)
- Development adjacent to ALR land shall conform to ALC Landscape Buffer Specifications (14).
- Retention, protection and enhancement of agricultural land shall be supported (14).
- Consolidation of small parcels of agricultural land is encouraged; reduction in land area of a viable farm operation is discouraged (14).

Development Process/Timeline:

Phase 1:

- Develop background report
- Conduct Focus Groups
- Develop Issues and Opportunities Report
- Develop Information Brochures

Phase 2:

- Public Open House and meeting - community comments.
- Agency and Organization consultation - those most likely to be involved in implementation.
- Conduct Focus groups - how to address issues & opportunities.
- Develop Draft Plan
- Public review at Fall Fair, Open House and Meeting
- Agency and Organization consultation
- Develop Final Plan

AAC Status:

According to the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, Comox Valley Regional District has an active AAC, as of February 2010. No information available on website, and no further information available at this time.

References to Agricultural Land Commission Act:

- No specific references to the Act, however the AAP makes several references to coordinating policy and decision making with the Agricultural Land Commission, specific to:
 - Environmental Stewardship
 - Delegation of decisions to municipalities (vs. ALC)
 - Regional Planning
 - Ongoing ALR management & policy development

References to the Right to Farm (Farm Practices Protection) Act:

- Acknowledgement that farmers are protected from nuisance lawsuits resulting from adjacent/conflict land uses.

References to Water Rights (Canada Water Act, BC Water Act):

- *“In most of the valley, rights to surface water from watercourses have already been allocated through licensing. In addition, limits for water removal are being refined based on the needs of the fishery. This means that in the driest season, when irrigation water is most needed, water allocation is likely to be prioritized to the fishery.”*
-

Municipal District of North Cowichan Strategic Agricultural Plan Summary

Municipal District of North Cowichan Statistics¹:

Population (2006)	27,557
Jurisdictional Area	
Regional District:	20,576
Total Area Farmed (2006)	6,898
% of Farmland:	33.5%
Number of Farms (2006)	~ 389
ALR	6,354

Date of agricultural plan: May, 2001

Title: *North Cowichan Strategic Agricultural Plan*

Length: 55 pages.

Prepared by: George Penfold, Westland Resources & Paul Guiton, Groundworks Strategic Marketing Solutions

Adoption Status:

- Formally recognized in the Municipal District of North Cowichan's 2002 Official Community Plan. See below.

Related documents:

- None.

Purpose Statement:

- “ ... to focus and co-ordinate decisions and actions of the participating and non-participatory organization(s). “

Highlights:

- “The agricultural sector in the Cowichan Valley will be healthy economically, socially and environmentally. It will consist of a medium scale farm component that markets through traditional commodity systems, and a small-scale farm component that markets both basic production and value added products to local and regional markets. The industry will be noted for its diversity and its support for, and from the community” (i).
- “ Recognizing that the survival of agriculture depends on developing a more competitive base, and stronger consumer support “ (i)

¹ District of North Cowichan Agriculture in Brief. 2009. Province of British Columbia. Ministry of Agriculture and Lands.

- *“Many issues and concerns of farmers can, however, be addressed through local planning and decision-making as well as by provincial initiatives.” (1)*
- *“The focus of this Strategic Plan for Agriculture in North Cowichan is on those matters that can be addressed locally.” (1)*
- *“For an agricultural strategic plan to be successful, choices have to be agreed upon, the implications have to be understood, and the responsibility for implementation shared ... “ (1).*
- *“ This strategy places most emphasis on taking advantage of opportunities and competitive advantages that exist in the area and on addressing local situations that result in reduced competitiveness relative to other comparable areas.”*

Outlined Issues:

- The North Cowichan Strategic Agricultural Plan organizes agricultural issues into Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Constraints:
1. Strengths:
 - 1.1. Product quality and diversity
 - The valley offers superior quality than imported foods, and boasts a diversity of crops.
 - 1.2. Economic Contribution and Potential
 - 1.3. Co-operation and Community Resources
 - There is a successful local farmers’ market, as well as an established agricultural community.
 - 1.4. Consumer loyalty
 - Vancouver Island locals are willing and wanting to support local producers.
 - 1.5. Processing
 - There are existing meat, cheese and wine processing facilities.
 - 1.6. Location
 - The District of North Cowichan is conveniently located close to supply major markets, tourism centres. Initiatives and infrastructure can be shared with other local agricultural areas.
 2. Weaknesses:
 - 2.1. Lack of community awareness of agriculture (Local Government & general public)
 - Agriculture is not included in economic development planning.
 - 2.2. Lack of infrastructure
 - Shortage of processing resources as well as limited local training programs.
 - 2.3. Lack of access to water
 - Farmers do not have assured access to water, despite their land being within the ALR
 - 2.4. High input costs
 - Most inputs must travel from the Mainland
 - Production of low value commodities
 - 2.5. Marketing
 - Local retailers do not support local producers
 - Limited marketing mechanisms are available to local producers
 - Agriculture is not included in promotion of local tourism
 - 2.6. Regulation
 - Environmental regulations place burdens on agriculture
 - Planning regulations/bylaws do not establish sufficient separation between land uses.
 3. Opportunities:
 - 3.1. Land Utilization
 - 3.2. Added Value
 - 3.3. Local Marketing
 - 3.4. Recycling

4. Constraints:

- 4.1. Loss of the “critical mass” required for viable agriculture production
- 4.2. Agricultural industry is in decline - potential loss of farms, skills/knowledge, infrastructure, economic activity, green space, and ALR land
- 4.3. Lack of connection with consumers and community leaders, retailers
- 4.4. Low awareness leads to reduced support from local government/community.
- 4.5. Cost of production
- 4.6. Environment
- 4.7. Continuing conflict between fisheries priorities and agriculture - it is impossible to farm economically.
- 4.8. Water supply
- 4.9. Lack of sufficient quantity of irrigation at critical times.

Objectives & Desired Outcomes:

NOTE: All goals & strategies in this summary (and in the *Strategic Agricultural Plan*) are recommendations only, provided by the consultant, the AAC, and other contributors to the farm plan. Following is a summary of the “goals”, “objectives”, and desired outcomes.

The North Cowichan Strategic Agricultural Plan outlines 6 major goals, each consisting of related objectives:

1. Goal: Improve the Planning Framework for Agriculture

- Over 80% of ALR land parcels are 8.0 hectares or larger; 18% are smaller than 0.4 hectare (1 acre) and likely in residential use.
- Larger parcels should be retained, and land outside of the ALR should be zoned to allow for agricultural use.
- Objectives:
 - 1.1. Protect the Agricultural Land Base
 - Use buffering or other techniques at critical urban/agricultural edges.
 - 1.2. Provide More Opportunities for Small Farms within the OCP and Zoning Bylaws
 - Update zoning bylaws to allow for more agricultural operations on farms (including value added, processing, marketing facilities), and allow for farming on all rural lands.
 - 1.3. Increase Agricultural Input on Planning Decisions
 - Utilize an agricultural planning committee.
 - Provide for better communication between all stakeholders (farmers, agencies, levels of government).

2. Goal: Support and Enhance Small Farm Section

- Small farms represent a size-able portion of North Cowichan’s agricultural industry - $\frac{1}{3}$ of the value of all farm products comes from small holdings (less than 4 hectares).
- Objectives:
 - 2.1. Revitalize the Small Farm Sector in the District of North Cowichan
 - Identify products with market potential that are suitable for local agriculture
 - Develop training programs with other stakeholders.

3. Goal: Expand Local Market Opportunities

- One of the greatest challenges facing agriculture is effective marketing. Small farms and large farms, respectively, require different approaches.
- Agri-tourism offers significant potential to the agricultural industry.
- Objectives:
 - 3.1. Enhance Marketing Opportunities for Medium/Large Scale Farms
 - 3.2. Enhance Local Marketing Opportunities for Small Farms
 - Provide a location for Farmer’s Market
 - Provide highway signage and other localised marketing initiatives; promote agricultural products to local schools.
 - 3.3. Establish the Cowichan Valley as a Centre for Value Added Processing of Agricultural Products
 - Identify potential sites for value-added processing; provide support.
 - 3.4. Capitalize on Available Agri-Tourism Opportunities

3.5. Expand the Greenhouse Sector Through the Use of Alternative Energy Sources

4. Goal: Improve Communications with the Community

- The lack of political and public awareness in the Cowichan Valley is a key challenge.
- Agriculture in the classroom is a key way to inform the public (at an early age).
- Objectives:
 - 4.1. Increase General Political and Public Awareness of the Agricultural Industry and Issues
 - 4.2. Develop a Strong Education in the Classroom Program with [Local School District (#79)]
 - 4.3. Increase Local Political and Public Awareness of the Agricultural Industry and Issues

5. Goal: Improve Land and Water Stewardship, Conservation and Management

- Soil management and irrigation are key to successful agriculture; these resources must be management wisely.
- Water is limited in the summer months.
- Objectives:
 - 5.1. Improve Access to Water and Water Management
 - Develop a water management plan for the region that considers agriculture's needs, include grey-water management.
 - Coordinate storm-water management with farming practices.
 - Address water access through shared surface-water rights.
 - 5.2. Improve Information Related to Soil and Water Management
 - Improve soil assesment for irrigation. (MAFF)
 - 5.3. Improve Farm Management Skills
 - Farmer education.

6. Goal: Reduce Cost and Regulatory Barriers

- Farmers need to be aware of regulations and policies; outside organizations (commodity interest groups) need to be responsible to deliver information.
- A lack of regulatory coordination is a costly burden on the agricultural industry.
- Objectives:
 - 6.1. Reduce Regulatory and Related Cost Burden on Agriculture
 - Ensure municipal costs do not discourage agricultural opportunities
 - Work with provincial and federal governments when needed.

Development Process/Timeline:

- 1998 - The Cowichan Agricultural Society (CAS) assisted in launching an initiative to establish the Island Farmers Alliance (IFA, to protect and advance their interests.
- Public workshops were held.
- The process was guided by a Steering Committee, with consultant assistance.
- The agricultural strategy was developed in conjunction with the District of North Cowichan's Official Community Plan review (2002).

Municipal District of North Cowichan OCP Supporting Statements:

- *“Historically, agriculture and forestry have played a major role in defining the character and economic growth of the District.” (21)*
- *“The support of agriculture is a fundamental part of the Community Plan and actions to strengthening of the role of agriculture in the local economy will be undertaken. To this end, a Strategic Plan for Agriculture in North Cowichan has been prepared.” (21)*
- *“The District will adopt the Agricultural Strategic Plan for North Cowichan as part of the Official Community Plan” (22).*
- The North Cowichan OCP briefly summarizes the goals and objectives of the Strategic Agricultural Plan, as well as provides supporting policies.

AAC Status:

- Ongoing. Generally meets on the second Tuesday of every month, however meetings in 2010 have been sporadic (twice between May and January). There are currently several vacancies.

References to Agricultural Land Commission Act:

- None.

References to the Right to Farm (Farm Practices Protection) Act:

- *“The Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries generally monitor municipal actions dealing directly with agricultural land use and management under the province’s “Right to Farm” legislation”*
- This quote is discussing that although farmers are protected under this act from overlapping legislation, that they need to be aware, or more-so informed, of regulations, policies, and legislations (and as such the Agricultural Strategy recommends that this responsibility be taken on by an independent organization or interest group.).

References to Water Rights:

- *“ ... access to water is limited through lack of available licensed capacity in watercourses ...”*
- *“Increase water access through shared surface water rights access”* - through cooperation of multiple agencies and levels of governments.

Notes and Observations

- One of the implementation strategies was to keep the AAC active for 5 years; it has been almost 10 since the plan was finished, and the AAC continues to meet regularly and report to council.

City of Richmond *Agricultural Viability Strategy* Summary

City of Richmond Statistics¹:

Population (2006)	174,461
Jurisdictional Area:	
Land:	13,325 ha
Water:	12,400 ha
Total:	25,725 ha
Total Area Farmed (2006)	3730 ha
% of Farmland (landbase):	39%
Number of Farms (2006)	172
ALR	5,182 ha

Date of : February 18, 2003

Title: *Richmond Agricultural Viability Strategy*

Length: 90 pages.

Prepared by: The City of Richmond, The “Core Team” (Steering Committee), & various consultants (see stakeholders).

Adoption Status:

- Approved by council resolution on May 26th, 2003.

Related documents:

- City of Richmond - Agricultural Survey Report - Executive Summary (1999)
- City of Richmond & Richmond Farmers' Institute - Agricultural Profile (2002)

Purpose Statement:

- “ to provide a 2021 vision and guiding principles, objectives and practical strategies for the future growth and viability of the agricultural sector in the City.” (15)

Highlights:

- “2021 Agricultural Viability Strategy Vision ‘The City and the farm ... working together for viable agriculture’.”

¹ City of Richmond Agricultural Overview. 2009. Province of British Columbia. Ministry of Agriculture and Lands. <<http://www.agf.gov.bc.ca/resmgmt/sf/Publications.htm#agstats>> Retrieved May 21, 2010.

- “... the agricultural sector is one that is at best, misunderstood, and, at worst, frequently ignored by those not directly involved with agriculture.” (5)
- “The development of this AVS is a long-term commitment and partnership of the City and agricultural community to strengthen and enhance agricultural viability in Richmond.” (5)
- The “strategy” provides 10 guiding principles, summarized as supporting continuing and competitive agricultural and economic growth, retaining ALR land, and provide for farmer support, increasing public awareness, coordinated decision making, environmental awareness, and effective communication.
- “It is envisioned that a Richmond Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC) will take the lead role in the implementation of the AVS. As well, the AAC will advise City Council, staff and the community on a wide range of agricultural matters.” (15)
- “Despite ... limitations, Richmond farms generate over \$56 million in revenues and contribute significantly to the local and provincial economy.” (13)

Issues/Challenges:

1. Agricultural interests are often inadequately represented in the City’s decision-making process.
 - An AAC is needed to advise city council.
2. Biophysical limitations - excessive wetness and lack of drainage.
 - Much of the city is prone to periodic flooding;
 - Richmond soils do not drain easily;
 - Despite this, many farms require irrigation in the summer months.
3. Service and infrastructure problems
 - Farmers must use city roads, often causing frustration for both the agricultural and non-agricultural community.
4. Pressure to urbanize & subdivide.
5. Rural-urban conflicts.
 - Not all ALR land is used for farming, community must understand agricultural area is a “working farm” landscape;
 - Conflicts along the rural-urban edge - nuisance complaints, environmentally sensitive areas
6. Conflicting land uses and high land values.
 - There is a need for city policy conformity.
7. Economic issues.
 - Inadequate infrastructure, conflicting regulations, subdivision, cost of land, absentee landlords, non-farm uses, both on and adjacent to ALR land.
8. Agricultural awareness
 - Urban population is growing and agricultural population is shrinking.

Strategies, Objectives & Desired Outcomes:

NOTE: All strategies in this summary and in the AAP are recommendations only, provided by the consultants, the steering committee, and other contributors to the farm plan. Following is a summary of the “strategies”, “objectives”, and “desired outcomes”.

Strategies:

1. Agricultural Decision Making Strategy:
 - Provide a framework to ensure that future decision-making recognizes agricultural interests;
 - Establish an Agricultural Advisory Committee, provide opportunities for improved communication;

- Ensure that decision making consults the agricultural sector, promotes agricultural viability, considers the impacts on agriculture.
2. Services and Infrastructure Strategy:
 - Provide farmers with necessary support, services & infrastructure, according to performance standards, and ensuring that projects do not interfere with normal farm practices (addressing flooding, drainage, transportation, and irrigation issues);
 - Ensure drainage improvements are made in the ALR, carried out in an environmentally holistic and comprehensive manner.
 3. City Policies and Bylaws Strategy:
 - Ensure conformity of all City policies;
 - Protect ALR land, ensure they meet land use objectives;
 - Emphasis on communication, dialogue and cooperation over legislation and bylaw enforcement.
 4. Non-Farm Uses and Parks and Recreation Strategy:
 - Ensure farming is the primary use of ALR land;
 - Minimize subdivision;
 - Direct proposed non-farm uses of ALR land to non-ALR land; ensure existing and proposed uses of ALR land support agricultural viability;
 - Ensure city park, transportation and other policies support agricultural viability.
 5. Agricultural Edge Strategy:
 - Recognize the rural-urban edge as a special management area, to mitigate/prevent conflict;
 - Recognize the need for compatible land uses at the agricultural edge.
 6. Strategy for Agriculture With Respect to the Environment and Environmentally Sensitive Areas:
 - Encourage ESA and farms to co-exist;
 - Provide necessary information, communication amongst farming community & government;
 - Encourage the use of best management practices.
 - Mitigate the impact of wildlife on agriculture.
 7. Public Education and Awareness Strategy:
 - Encourage residents to learn more about local agriculture and to support locally-grown products;
 - Ensure awareness of farm practices by those who live near or adjacent to the ALR;
 - Provide opportunities for communication between agricultural and non-agricultural communities.
 8. Economic Growth and Diversification Strategy:
 - Encourage long-term economic success through growth and diversification;
 - Assist farmers to lower production costs, keep farmers up to date with agricultural opportunities for growth and opportunity;
 - Increase demand for locally-grown products;
 - Encourage support services and industry to locate in Richmond.

Desired Outcomes:

1. Favourable and sustainable economic returns for farmers;
2. Supportive policy framework and decision-making structure;
3. Beneficial servicing and infrastructure;
4. Increase encouragement from the community;
5. Increased support for Richmond agricultural products;
6. Increased awareness and respect for the needs of the agricultural and urban communities
7. Sustainable environment which provides quality air, water, and land which supports and complements farming;
8. A positive outlook to attract more young people to choose to farm; and
9. Better working partnerships among important stakeholders.

Development Process/Timeline:

- The City of Richmond divided their development of an AAP into 5 phases:
 - I) Council approves preparation of the AVS, finalizes funding, organized preparation of background reports (Agricultural Profile & Survey Report).
 - II) Farmers' workshops and Public Open House for input. Research continued, including partnerships with federal and provincial agencies.
 - III) Consultant team hired & "Agricultural Viability Strategy" developed.
 - IV) "Strategy" presented to council.
 - V) Full implementation of the "Agricultural Viability Strategy".

City of Richmond OCP Supporting Statements:

- Building use restrictions (2 - 7) are the only specific reference to the Viability Strategy.
- The City of Richmond OCP outlines several agricultural policies, paralleling the *Agricultural Viability Strategy*, however in limited depth. Most notably:
 - "Continue to protect all farmlands in the Agricultural Land Reserve."
 - "Maintain and enhance agricultural viability and productivity in Richmond." (2 -3)
 - "Maintain and improve the quality of drainage and irrigation systems to promote the management of floodplain lands and agricultural operations" (7 - 5).
 - Development Permit, Edge, and Buffer Guidelines (9 - 1).

AAC Status:

- Ongoing. 9 members, consisting of 5 representatives from the Richmond Farmers Institute, 2 from the general farming community, one member from the Advisory committee on the Environment (Richmond), and one member of the general public. Members are selected by council for 2 year terms.

References to Agricultural Land Commission Act:

- General description, purpose, and application provided in Appendix 1 (74).
- Acknowledges that approval is required for specific land uses (10).

References to the Right to Farm (Farm Practices Protection) Act:

- General Description, purpose, and application provided in Appendix 1 (74).
- Definition of "farm operation", relative to the **Farm Practices Protection Act** provided (10).
- Recommendations provided to "work towards consistency" with the Act, within both the "*City Policies and Bylaws Strategy*" and Environmentally Sensitive Areas Strategy (26, 37)

AAP References to Water Rights (Canada Water Act, BC Water Act):

- None.

City of Surrey Agricultural Plan Summary

City of Surrey Statistics¹:

Population (2006)	364,976
Jurisdictional Area:	
Land	31,837 ha
Water	4,610 ha
Total	36,447 ha
Total Area Farmed (2006)	9,307 ha
% of Farmland:	29.23%
ALR	9,228 ha
Number of Farms (2006)	487
Average Farm Size (2006)	19.1 ha

Date of AAP: September 27, 1999

Title: *Surrey Agricultural Plan: Phase 2 Report - Key Issues and Recommended Actions For Enhancing Surrey Agriculture.* Also unofficially referred to as the "*Farm Community Plan*".

Length: 67 pages.

Prepared by: Zbeetnoff Agro-Environmental Consulting & Quadra Planning Consultants Ltd.

Related documents: Phase 1 Report: Analysis of Economic and Planning Issues facing Agriculture in the City of Surrey. July 1999

Adoption Status:

- Adopted by council resolution. Date unknown.

Purpose Statement:

- "to review and address agricultural development issues"
- "to provide options for resolving conflicts between agricultural use of the land base and other uses"
- "to ensure the long-term viability of agriculture in the City of Surrey" (2)

¹ City of Surrey Agricultural Overview. 2009. Government of British Columbia. Ministry of Agriculture and Lands. <<http://www.agf.gov.bc.ca/resmgmt/sf/Publications.htm#agstats>>

Highlights:

- “This report strongly recommends action by the various stakeholders to facilitate agricultural development in the City.” (ii)
- “ In order to be viable, agriculture in Surrey must have the ability to adapt to changing economic conditions and productively use the lands reserved for it. “ (2)

Outlined Issues & Implementation strategies:

NOTE: All strategies in this summary and in the *Surrey Agricultural Plan* are recommendations only, provided by the consultant, advised by the AAC and other contributors to the farm plan. Following is a summary of the issues and recommended strategies.

1. Requirements for Continued Agricultural Viability:

- 1.1. Agricultural land use efficiency
 - Investment and development in agricultural are vital to improving infrastructure servicing, land use efficiency, and decreasing production costs and urban conflict (at the farmer level).
 - Incentives will be created to attract more intensive agriculture and research facilities, create desired farm operations in appropriate areas (use of DPA), foster developer-farmer relationships, create utility pre-servicing, and increased efficiency of farm operations (eg. increased water resources).
- 1.2. Rural-urban conflicts
 - Animosity from neighbouring urban developments are unavoidable and can constrain farm operations, disrupt practices, create nuisance complaints, and lead to potential conflicts
 - Rural-urban compatibility will be promoted through both city and provincial initiatives, aimed at both farmers and urban residents.
- 1.3. Demand for local agricultural products
 - Relationship of local-food production to local-food demand is seen as key to the long-term preservation of the ALR in the City of Surrey
 - Objectives to increase local demand for local agriculture products will be met by giving preference to business which utilize local food, promoting region-based value-added services, and identifying & attracting services which utilize localised food.
- 1.4. Marketing of local agricultural products
 - Surrey’s population consumes food products that can be produced locally, and purchase food without any knowledge of the food’s origin
 - The proportion of food consumed *in Surrey* that is obtained by retailers from outside of the city is increasing - food retailers in BC have procurement policies that are based primarily on lowest price, and Surrey producers are forced to compete at an international level.
 - Objectives to increase local food awareness will be met through education, assistance in marketing facilities, support of industry links, promote awareness of localised food production methods, provide locations for farmers markets, marketing programs, and various financial incentives.
- 1.5. Agricultural service industry support
 - Agricultural inputs (ie fertilizer, fuel, seed, equipment) is obtained outside of the city and represents lost local economic opportunity.
 - Objectives to ensure that essential agricultural support services remain in Surrey will be met through the promotion of support services, continuing accommodation of these services, and accommodation of the service industry into ALR areas through streamlined business development procedures.
- 1.6. Farm succession

- Gaps in knowledge (through transfer of ownership and retirement) are creating inefficiencies in farming practices, sub-standard land use, higher costs and lower revenues, and financial stress (on behalf of farmers).
- Objectives to ensure continued productivity will be met through facilitating agricultural apprenticeships, financial purchase incentives, and regional relationships with the GVRD.

2. Encroachment on the Agricultural Land Base

2.1. Conversion of land within the ALR for non-farming purposes

- “Outright uses” (See ALC Act) remove land from the ALR and convert to alternatives uses, resulting in a reduced agricultural land pool, potential & unwanted wildlife & recreation impacts, and creates a higher market value for farmland.
- Objectives to reduce ALR status removal will be met through lobbying the ALC for amended policies, regulatory measures (proposed bylaws), and encouragement of non-ALR conversion to agriculture.

2.2. Impact of ownership of ALR land by non-farmers

- Non-farmer ownership of ALR land tends to have a negative effect on Surrey's agriculture.
- Objectives to ensure that ALR land held by non-farmers is available for farming will be met by possible changes to regulations, and financial incentives.

2.3. Impact of residential development within the ALR

- Large (individual) residences on ALR parcels create fragmentation and disrupt neighbouring properties.
- Objectives to minimize the impact of new residences in the ALR will be met by possible bylaw adoptions, lobbying of the ALC for ALC Act amendments, the encouragement of individual farm plans, and zoning “compatibility” requirements.

2.4. Conversion of agricultural land outside the ALR for non-farming purposes.

- Separation of agricultural and urban land uses is necessary to avoid conflict - conversion of land adjacent to agriculture has led to interface problems.
- Objectives to maintain farming outside the ALR boundary (to provide a transition) will be met by regulatory measures and the ongoing retention of agricultural buffer lands.

3. Encroachment on Agricultural Operations

3.1. Recreational access

- Recreational access to agricultural lands, usually ungranted, results in disruption of activities, vandalism, property damage, littering and food safety issues.
- Objectives to mitigate recreation impacts and disruptions will be met through increasing public awareness, education, city planning (parks layout), physical barriers, increased security, financial payouts, and involving farmers in decision-making processes.

3.2. Wildlife depredation of crops

- Migrating and indigenous wildlife (mostly avian) are a nuisance, creating field damage, crop loss and contamination.
- Objectives to reduce damage, loss, as well as compensate farmers for losses will be met through technical advising, financial assistance, wildlife management techniques, and providing easements on agricultural land for wildlife.

3.3. Drainage, irrigation and flood control

- Flooding and irrigation issues cause property damage and reduce productivity, respectively.
- Objectives to improve drainage, reduce flooding, and provide irrigation will be met mainly through infrastructure improvements and improved irrigation technology.

3.4. Pesticide drift and chemical usage

- Risk is somewhat perceived, however chemicals have the potential to adversely affect wildlife, water and air quality.

- Objectives to manage this threat can be met through signage, promotion of organic markets, financial assistance to farmers that reduce chemical use, vegetative buffers, education of the public, and encouragement of pesticide-free production adjacent to “problem” areas.

3.5. Fish habitat protection

- Agricultural activities can be harmful to fish habitats by impairing water quality from manure, nutrient and pesticide runoff.
- Objectives to reduce impacts on fish habitats, while balancing needs of both, can be met through monitoring and continued upkeep of appropriate mitigation measures.

3.6. Safe farm vehicle movement

- Increased traffic flow on rural roads is negatively affecting farm vehicle movement.
- Providing for safe farm vehicle movement through transportation planning and public education.

- The AAC will be continually consulted for recommendations and further strategies to address issues.
- The City of Surrey, along with the ALC and Provincial Government are and will continue to be key stakeholders in executing agricultural plan strategies.

City of Surrey OCP (1996) Supporting Statements:

- All local area (incl. secondary or neighbourhood plans) existing on the 1996 adoption date of Surrey’s OCP are retained in their “resolution” status. Area plans may be amended by council resolution. (192)
- The “**Farm Community Plan**”, as outlined in OCP, “establishes specific policies and actions to protect agricultural areas and enhance the viability of farming”. It is intended to “guide development of farm community while increasing public awareness of its importance”. (207)
- Section F-1 (Protect Agriculture and Agricultural Areas) of the City of Surrey OCP specifically and comprehensively address key agricultural issues, including:
 - Buffering & Adjacent land use
 - Agricultural land use & conformity
 - Agricultural Land Reserve & Provincial legislation
 - Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC)
 - Local support of agricultural, retail activity, and value added industries
 - Environmental guidelines and protection
 - Water use, quality, irrigation and drainage
 - Community agriculture awareness (90 - 93)
- The City of Surrey OCP makes specific references to the **Surrey Agricultural Plan**:
 - I. Agricultural “objectives are reinforced by **Surrey’s Agricultural Plan**. (5)
 - II. City will protect farmland as a resource for agriculture, heritage, and distinct landscape, and will “address farm viability issues with advisement from the **Surrey Agricultural Plan**”. (89)
 - I. The “**Agricultural Plan**” was “adopted” by council in 1999 to “propose a range of measures to maintain a healthy farming economy in Surrey”. (89)
 - II. Section F-1.2 (6): “Utilize guidelines and policies recommended in the **Surrey Agricultural Plan**.” (91)
 - III. Implementation measures: “Pursue objectives and strategies in conjunction with **Surrey’s Agricultural Plan**” (93)
 - IV. Floor area ration on agricultural lands is governed by the **Surrey Agricultural Plan** (143)
- The City of Surrey OCP outlines implementation measures to protect and enhance agriculture:
 - I. Work with the AAC, ALC & farmers to promote “higher” uses of agricultural land
 - II. Amend bylaws where necessary to conform to provincial legislation, specifically the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* and the *Farm Practices Protection Act*.
 - III. Work with engineering department

- IV. Protect ALR land and farm practices through both development applications and the use of the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* and the *Farm Practices Protection Act*.
- V. Use DPA guidelines to establish effective buffers. (93)

- The City of Surrey OCP outlines community indicators to help protect agricultural areas and enhance farming, including area of farmland, sales amounts, ALR lands, and agricultural zoned land (93).
- All properties outside agricultural designation that abut those lands, as well as all land within 300 meters of agricultural designated land are designated as “*farm sensitive lands*” and require a Development Permit. Regulations include: buffers, minimum building distance, landscape requirements, and guidelines for construction of doors, windows, building clusters, etc. (226)

Development Process/Timeline:

Not available.

References to Agricultural Land Commission Act:

- Under the section titled “*Current Surrey Agricultural Policies and Initiatives*”, the Surrey AAP states that in order to maintain agricultural activities, the city must “*Ensure that all land uses within the ALR conform to the policies and regulations of the **Agricultural Land Commission Act** and the **Farm Practices Protection Act**.*” (7-8)
- Maintaining agricultural activities will be further accommodated by ensuring that land uses within the ALR conform to the **Agricultural Land Commission Act** and **Farm Practices Protection Act**.
- Agriculture in Surrey should be pursued “*in accordance with the intent of such legislation in the **Agricultural Commission Act** and the **Farm Practices Protection Act**.*” (8)

References to the Right to Farm (Farm Practices Protection) Act:

- “*Part of the impetus for an Agriculture Plan was the enactment of the Farm Practices Protection Act which provide(s) local governments with opportunities and tools to plan for and implement policies with respect to agriculture*” (1).
- Improve consistency with **Farm Practices Protection Act** (16).
- The **Farm Practices Protection Act** protects the rights of farmers, but localised action will be needed to reduce rural-urban conflict (17).
- See notes above under ALC Act.

References to Water Rights (Canada Water Act, BC Water Act):

- “*BC ownership of water is enshrined in the **Water Act***” (12)

Rural Oliver *Agricultural Area Plan* Summary

“Rural Oliver” (Electoral Area C)¹ Statistics:

Population (2006)	3,899
Jurisdictional Area:	
Electoral Area ‘C’	63,300 ha
Plan Study Area	
Total Area Farmed (date)	7,442 ha
% of Farmland:	
Number of Farms (date)	~ 400
ALR	9,275

Date of *Agricultural Area Plan*: 2008

Title: “*Agricultural Area Plan*”

Length: 57 pages

Prepared by: Steering Committee & Area ‘C’ Director Allan Patton

Adoption Status:

- Adopted by board resolution. Date unknown.

Related documents:

- None.

Purpose Statement:

- No specific purpose statement.

Highlights:

- “.... *pursue economic prosperity through the enhancement and promotion of its agricultural assets.*” (6)
- “*Through a series of public strategy meetings, Rural Oliver and Town of Oliver residents have jointly determined that preserving and enhancing the agricultural economy and quality of lifestyle is the highest priority.*”
- “.... *we describe this as “an evolutionary plan”. It will be a “living “document” to be modified over time to fulfill the needs of community today and still incorporate new components* “

¹ Electoral Area ‘C’ is contained within the Okanagan-Similkameen Regional District. Statistics do not include the town of Oliver (which has a population of 4,370).

Outlined Issues:

1. Agricultural Land Use
 - Fragmentation & loss of farm land; encroachment of the municipality into rural areas.
 - Non-productive structures on farmland, non-agricultural use of land, non-farmer renters, under-utilized properties
 - Allocation of crown land to non-agricultural uses/designations
2. Agricultural Water Supply, Quality and Access
 - Climate change effects on the availability & of water: international competition, decreased capability of amounts used
 - Deteriorating quality of water
 - Increasing cost
 - No farmer control over delivery of water.
3. Pursuing Economic Prosperity
 - Lack of farm succession
 - Restricted access to information, markets, and customers
 - Lack of agri-tourism support
 - Shortage of temporary farm workers.
 - Under-supplied local markets for agricultural products.
 - Rural-urban conflicts
4. Agro-Environmental Interface
 - Soil erosion.
 - Rehabilitation of extraction sites (particularly gravel deposits)
 - Poor air quality from incineration of agricultural debris
 - Negative effects of native ecosystems & fish habitats
 - Wildlife interface
5. Rural-Urban Interface
 - Encroachment on the ability of farmers to carry out acceptable farm practices: nuisance complaints and unjustified harassment - boosting of farmer confidence is necessary
 - Difficulties in interpreting best management practices in Farm Practices Board
6. Corridors and Rights-of-Way
 - Rural road safety
 - Trails, transportation & power corridors through agricultural areas
 - Use of abandoned rail beds (Kettle Valley)
 - Navigation through rural areas (for visitors)
7. Enhancing the Profile of Local Agriculture
 - Public awareness is lacking; are not informed, although they like the “feel” of agriculture in the valley.
8. Regulation
 - loss of agricultural land to non-agricultural uses.
 - Subdivision and re-zoning of small ALR parcels
 - Impact of tourism and “wine capital” development on agriculture.

Objectives & Desired Outcomes:

NOTE: All strategies in this summary and in the *Agricultural Area Plan* are recommendations only, provided by the consultant, the AAC, and other contributors to the farm plan. Following is a summary of the “goals”, and “strategies”. (Only a selection of strategies are included for each goal).

1. Agricultural Land Use

Goal: *“To protect and expand the agricultural land base so as to maximize the primary production area.”* (31)

Recommended Strategies:

- Zoning regulations, including limited non-farm uses of land in agricultural areas, building coverage regulations, clustering and other efficient placement of buildings.
- Limits on non-farming purposes, labour housing designations.
- Retain all ALR land, regardless of size, encourage small land holders to make land available
- Seek to include non-ALR crown agricultural land into the ALR.
- Employ SGOG principles to minimize footprint

2. Agricultural Water Supply, Quality and Access

Goal: *“To ensure a secure, adequate, and affordable supply and quality of water for agriculture now and in the future.”* (32)

Recommended Strategies:

- Address water rights in the interest of agriculture, water rights attached to agricultural land
- Develop best management practices
- Promote more efficient technology, storage, and use of irrigation systems/water.
- Coordination of government efforts to supply, retain, and transport water

3. Pursuing Economic Prosperity

Goal: *“To ensure the long term economic viability of local agriculture”.* (33)

Recommended Strategies:

- Work with provincial and federal governments to maintain labour supply.
- Lobby local government to provide farmer and labour friendly land use farm bylaws
- Promote agri-tourism through already popular “wine capital” theme
- Employ wine-theme marketing opportunities, engage direct marketing in the local community
- Work with the town of Oliver

4. Agro-Environmental Interface

Goal: *“To support environmental initiatives that promote sustainable agricultural farming practices and recognize society’s obligations to farmers for wildlife damage losses and maintenance of habitat.”* (34)

Recommended Strategies:

- Educate farmers & encourage environmental farm plans
- Support ecological initiatives to enhance wildlife habitat; compensate farmers for damages/loss of farmland
- Monitor ALC decisions regarding gravel pit operations and site remediation.
- Pursue “cooperative” decisions regarding agricultural organic waste

5. Rural-Urban Interface

Goal: *“To ensure that agriculture co-exists with non-agricultural land uses with a minimum of conflict.”* (35)

Recommended Strategies:

- Require covenants on residential properties adjacent to agriculture.
- Establish OCP & zoning bylaws to establish buffers
- Direct growth to the town of Oliver.
- Establish development permit areas for sites adjacent to ALR.
- Consider a Farm Bylaw
- Education of stakeholders & decision makers.

6. Corridors and Rights-of-Way

Goal: *“To ensure that agricultural activities and potential impacts are taken into account in the decision-making related to the locating and designing of these facilities.”* (35)

Recommended Strategies:

- Require AAC participation in highway routing and design.
- Lobby for secondary road upgrading
- Develop signage, for both highway traffic, and trail users.

7. Enhancing the Profile of Local Agriculture

Goal: *“To increase the profile, appeal and appreciation of agriculture in the Valley.”* (36)

Recommended Strategies:

- Proclaim income and employment benefits/opportunities generated by local agriculture.
- Integrate agricultural growth into economic growth trends.
- Link agriculture to tourism.
- Engage the local press.
- Develop content in high-school curriculums.

8. Regulation

Goal: *“To ensure that regulatory policy guiding Oliver area development supports working agriculture and the objectives of the agricultural area plan.”* (36)

Recommended Strategies:

- Prevent agricultural subdivision, rezoning and conversion through bylaw amendment.
- Explore the development of a Farm Bylaw

- Adopt strengthened ALC buffering guidelines.
- Work with the Farm Practices board to ensure dispute resolution takes into account local “common acceptable” practices.

Development Process/Timeline:

- September 2003: Full day design charrette.
- February 2004: Community workshops.
- May 2004: Sub committee reports filed.
- June - August 2004: Research and Surveys
- December 2004: Draft AAP
- Fall 2005: In depth interviews.
- February 2006: Interviewing of focus groups.
- May 2006: Finalization

Rural Oliver OCP Supporting Statements¹:

- There is no direct mention of the AAP within the OCP (as the OCP pre-dates the AAP). However, it makes mention of supporting the creation of an AAP.
- The OCP has an extensive list of objectives and policies, supporting the retention and development of agriculture.

AAC Status:

- Ongoing.

APPENDIX C. Outline of process for agricultural planning

The following is an outline of proposed steps for an agricultural planning process that leads to the formal adoption of an Agricultural Area Plan (AAP).

- The timing of an AAP would ideally be before an OCP update (so that the AAP could be included as a secondary plan in the new OCP).
- Inform applicants of:
 - The benefits of a agricultural planning.
 - The intended outcomes, which include:
 - Better understanding of agriculture within local government.
 - Agricultural representation in planning processes.
 - Reduced urban-rural conflict through land-use planning, policy, and decision-making/conflict resolution frameworks.
 - Improved agricultural viability through infrastructure planning and economic development.
 - Improved public awareness as a secondary result of the planning process and policy implementation.
 - OCP amendment and inclusion of AAP policies and strategies.
 - An itemised implementation strategy, with clear goals, allocated funding, committed parties, and a set time-line.
 - On-going support/mentoring and follow-up by IAF
 - Support can be given by mentoring, providing information, and advising applicants through the process
- Local government sets goals, identifies the economic and social importance of agriculture.
 - Determines whether an AAP is an appropriate policy for the agricultural area
 - Explicitly states goal in terms of (1) developing an agricultural plan, (2) recommending changes to existing land use policies and regulations, or (3) formally adopting an Agricultural Area Plan as a secondary plan.
- Completes land-use inventory.
- Creates an Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC)
 - AAC should include farmer representation from all commodity groups.
 - AAC should be structured as a “Committee of Council” with councillor representation, as well as staff representation (planner).
 - The AAC should continue to operate as a committee indefinitely after the creation of the plan.
- Development of plan begins, including extensive public consultation.
- The planning process leads to two possible reports:
 - The first document will essentially be an “Issues and Opportunities”, or “Agricultural Strategy” report, outlining issues and objectives, economic developing, and such. This can include issues that are perhaps beyond the

jurisdiction of LG, but still within reach. Addressing these can be done by an itemized list of goals and implementation strategies, with set timelines.

- As required, the second document is the AAP structured as a “neighbourhood plan” to be adopted as a secondary plan of the OCP (refer to Smith (1998) for suggested contents). The AAP should contain OCP-type language, and include policies and procedures related to agriculture that are under the direct control of the local government, such as:
 - Buffer zones.
 - Covenants.
 - Infrastructure policy/plans.
 - Homeplate policies.
 - Framework for decision-making
 - ALR referrals
 - Signage policies
 - Zoning
 - Water use
 - Farmer’s market
 - Infrastructure (roads, access, irrigation, drainage).
- Develop a plan for implementation. Establish a committee to oversee the implementation process. Define the continuing role of the AAC.