



## **AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY AND ECONOMIC ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEE**

Wednesday, February 28, 2018 at 7:00pm  
Salmon River Committee Room  
4<sup>th</sup> Floor, 20338 – 65 Avenue, Langley, BC

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### **A G E N D A**

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#### **A. APPROVAL AND RECEIPT OF AGENDA ITEMS**

1. **Agricultural Advisory and Economic Enhancement Committee -  
February 28, 2018**

Recommendation that the Agricultural Advisory and Economic Enhancement Committee approve the agenda and receive the agenda items of the February 28, 2018 meeting.

#### **B. ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

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1. **Agricultural Advisory and Economic Enhancement Committee -  
January 24, 2018**

Recommendation that the Agricultural Advisory and Economic Enhancement Committee adopt the Minutes of the January 24, 2018 meeting.

#### **C. DELEGATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS**

1. **Young Agrarians – Land Matching Program**

Darcy Smith, Young Agrarians Land Matcher, Lower Mainland

#### **D. REPORTS**

#### **E. CORRESPONDENCE**

#### **F. WORK PROGRAM**

#### **G. COUNCIL REFERRALS**

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**H. OTHER BUSINESS AND ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

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**1. ALR Exclusion Application at 25895-88 Avenue**

Continuation from the January 24, 2018 AAEEC Meeting.

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**2. Minister of Agriculture's Advisory Committee**

Revitalizing the Agricultural Land Reserve and the Agricultural Land Commission,  
Discussion Paper for Stakeholder Consultation and Public Engagement.

(Staff comments to be provided on table)

**3. Committee Photo**

Photo to be re-taken.

**N. NEXT MEETING**

**Date:** Wednesday, March 28, 2017  
**Location:** Salmon River Committee Room  
4<sup>th</sup> Floor, 20338 – 65 Avenue  
**Time:** 7:00 pm

**O. TERMINATE**

Township of  
**Langley**



Est. 1873

## AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY AND ECONOMIC ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEE

Wednesday, January 24, 2018 at 7:00pm  
Salmon River Committee Room  
4<sup>th</sup> Floor, 20338 – 65 Avenue, Langley, BC

### MINUTES

#### **Present:**

M. Gunn, Community Representative Co-Chair  
Councillor D. Davis, Council Representative Co-Chair

C. Clark, D. Horn, D. Kang, N. Killeen, T. Knight, B. Sharp, A. Spencer, and O. Stanley

#### **Staff:**

B. Andrews, Economic Development Coordinator  
J. Chu, Manager, Long Range Planning  
K. Stepto, Recording Secretary  
P. Tulumello, Director, Arts, Culture, and Community Initiatives

#### **Guests:**

Mayor J. Froese  
B. Bortolin, San Group  
J. Moonen, John Moonen and Associates

#### **Welcome**

Councillor Davis welcomed everyone.

Mayor Froese welcomed everyone and thanked members for volunteering their time.

#### **Election of 2018 Community Co-Chair**

O. Stanley nominated M. Gunn to be Co-Chair.  
D. Kang seconded the nomination.

M. Gunn was elected Co-Chair, by acclamation, and assumed the position for the rest of the meeting.

#### **Code of Ethics Signing**

Members signed the *"Code of Ethics, Confidentiality, and Conflict of Interest for Council Members and Appointees"*.

Round table introductions took place.

## A. APPROVAL AND RECEIPT OF AGENDA ITEMS

### 1. **Agricultural Advisory and Economic Enhancement Committee - January 24, 2018**

Moved by N. Killeen,  
 Seconded by C. Clark,  
 That the Agricultural Advisory and Economic Enhancement Committee approve the agenda and receive the agenda items of the January 24, 2018 meeting, as amended.

**CARRIED**

**Clerk's Note:** Items E.2, "Ministry of Agriculture AAC workshop", and D.2, "Fraser Valley Destination Development Report", were added to the agenda.

## B. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

### 1. **Agricultural Advisory and Economic Enhancement Committee - October 25, 2017**

Moved by D. Kang,  
 Seconded by A. Spencer,  
 That the Agricultural Advisory and Economic Enhancement Committee adopt the Minutes of the October 25, 2017 meeting.

**CARRIED**

## C. DELEGATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

### 1. **Proposed Fort Langley Projects**

P. Tulumello presented three projects proposed for Fort Langley for the committee's input. He noted that the initiatives are a re-visioning of existing properties owned by the Township along with properties and rights-of way owned by other government agencies.

The three projects presented were:

- Fort to Fort Trail Pedestrian Bridge
- Haldi House Preservation/Housing Initiative and early Fort Langley building relocation
- TOL Community/Indigenous Museums mixed development project

The following information was provided:

#### **Pedestrian Bridge – TransCanada Trail**

- TOL has had discussions with Fort Langley National Historic Site and Kwantlen First Nation (KFN) to connect the existing museums on King Street and the Fort to the riverfront by way of a pedestrian/cycling bridge over the CN Rail and River Road.

### C. DELEGATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

- The TransCanada Trail system could be realigned up Mavis Street, past the Museum, and over a new pedestrian overpass.

#### **Haldi House Preservation Project Review (Bedford House)**

- TOL is in discussion with the Seyem Qwantlen Business group and another community group to restore and relocate the Jacob Haldi House to the east end of the property and restore it to its original condition. The Haldi House is a heritage home that is presently a part of the Bedford House Property. The project could also include some rowing and paddling infrastructure at grade, an art gallery reception space on the first floor, and arts studios on the upper two floors.
- A mixed use housing/commercial development including artist/livework spaces, an arts themed Aboriginal lodge with underground parking is also being investigated.

#### **Museums – Mixed Development Project**

- Designs for a new Cultural Centre for Fort Langley were presented. It was reported that the current museum facility will be 60 years old in 2018 and does not meet present day standards for museum operations.
- A new facility will allow the museum to meet the increasing demand for programs and services, and will ensure the protection of the Township's collection of art, artifacts, photographs, and documents.
- KFN, through the Seyem Qwantlen Business Group, is working with the Township towards the goal of two museums under one roof and the presentation of history from a local First Nations perspective.
- The museum would include a fixed seating presentation theatre, gallery and exhibition space, school program space, library, archive and storage space, rooftop amenity space, and rental space.

Members of AAEEC provided some feedback and raised concerns about parking and the two units on top of the museum. A shuttle service was suggested. The projects were well received.

Next steps for these projects include:

- Consultation with other Advisory Committees for their feedback;
- Online survey – [tol.ca/flp](http://tol.ca/flp);
- Public Open House – February 8, 3:00 – 8:00pm, St. Andrews United Church Hall on Glover Road

### 2. **ALR Exclusion Application at 25895 – 88 Avenue**

J. Moonen, John Moonen and Associates, and B. Bortolin, VP Business Development, San Group, provided a presentation on Axon Lumber's application for the property located at 25985 - 88 Avenue to exclude the northern 14 acres from the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR), subdivide it and rezone the northern portion to M-5, and farm the remaining (south portion) 20 acres.

B. Bortolin commented that Axon Lumber is a division of San Group and is a sorting, grading, and manufacturing facility that produces semi finished and finished lumber products for export markets. The 14 acres requested to be

### C. DELEGATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

excluded from the ALR has not been farmed since at least 1966. Axon Lumber would like to use the 14 acres as storage for lumber, and leave the southern portion in the ALR to lease out for more intensive agriculture, hopefully to a young farm family in Langley. Rezoning the property will also allow Axon to employ a further 40-50 people (currently employ 53).

J. Moonen provided information on the factors the Agricultural Land Commission considers when determining “agricultural suitability”:

1. A property’s size, ie. is it too small to be economically farmed?
2. Agricultural market factors, ie. is there infrastructure to serve a farming operation and proximity to markets?
3. A property’s location and degree of isolation vis-à-vis other ALR properties and non-farm uses. Whether access to a property for farm vehicles and workers is difficult and/or uneconomic.
  - a. The portion of the site proposed for exclusion is surrounded on three sides by a) the CN Rail railroad to the south, b) an industrial property to the west, and c) the Fraser River to the north.
  - b. The river and railroad make access difficult.
  - c. Exclusion of the northern portion and its proposed use as lumber storage/processing would not hinder or impact the continued use of the remaining southern portion for agricultural purposes.
4. Whether rainfall or flooding means that significant drainage and irrigation improvements would be necessary in order to farm the property, and whether those improvements are either technically impossible or economically prohibitive.
  - a. The cost of preventing flooding on the northern portion of the site and construction of drainage is estimated at \$185,000. Would take many years to recover from any potential farm revenues.
5. A property’s topography, ie. are there natural or man-made features which make the property difficult to farm?
  - a. East Creek separates the western third of the northern portion from the remainder, rendering this area unsuitable for agriculture without crossing. Streamside Protection Regulation mandates setbacks from the Fraser River which eliminates farming activity within 30 metres of the top of the riverbank.
  - b. The cost to clean up the northern portion to make it suitable for agriculture is estimated at \$1,955,000.

They concluded by stating that the cost to make this 14 acres farmable and the access limitations, make this portion of land highly unsuitable for agriculture.

Discussion ensued, and the following comments/questions were raised by the committee:

- Will this increase truck traffic in the area?
- What will the impact be of this proposed industrial use on surrounding agriculture?
- Should the riverfront be industrialized?
- Streamside setbacks will need to be considered.
- Appears to be good use of non-farmable land.

**C. DELEGATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS**

- Makes economic sense to employ 50 more people.
- Must consider fire protection.
- This area around the river may not be there forever, so it makes sense to use it while it is still useable.

**MOTION**

Moved by B. Sharp,

Seconded by T. Knight,

That the AAEEC receive the delegation and request a staff report on the impact of removing a portion of property at 25985 - 88 Avenue from the Agricultural Land Reserve.

**CARRIED**

C. Clark, D. Kang, and A. Spencer opposed

**D. REPORTS**

**1. AAEEC 2017 Annual Report**

Staff presented a draft AAEEC 2017 Annual Report for review.

**MOTION**

Moved by B. Sharp,

Seconded by T. Knight,

That the Agricultural Advisory and Economic Enhancement Committee endorse the draft AAEEC 2017 Annual Report, as amended, and further that the report be forwarded to Council for information.

**CARRIED**

**2. Fraser Valley Destination Development**

T. Knight attended the Fraser Valley Destination Development information meeting following an open invitation to the AAEEC. He then attended a second meeting as a member of the Fraser Valley Destination Working Committee. He reported that the Fraser Valley Destination Strategy is being developed to enhance competitiveness of the Fraser Valley over the next 10 years and beyond. The strategy is being developed as part of Destination BC's Destination Development Program.

He presented an initial report on table for the AAEEC's information and stated a final report will be presented once the working committee concludes.

## **E. CORRESPONDENCE**

### **1. Social Sustainability Strategy**

The committee received a memo from P. Ward, Strategic/Social Planner, regarding information about the Social Sustainability Strategy and how to apply to be on the Task Force. More information can be found at [tol.ca/socialstrategy](http://tol.ca/socialstrategy).

### **2. Ministry of Agriculture AAC Workshop**

Staff presented information regarding the AAC Workshop to be held on February 21, 2018 at Newlands Golf and Country Club. The whole committee expressed interest in attending this workshop. Staff will look into registration and report back to the committee.

## **MEETING EXTENDED**

Moved by N. Killeen,  
 Seconded by C. Clark,  
 That the meeting be extended to 9:15pm.

## **CARRIED**

## **F. WORK PROGRAM**

### **1. Review of Terms of Reference**

The committee reviewed the current AAEEC Terms of Reference.

## **MOTION**

Moved by B. Sharp,  
 Seconded by C. Clark  
 That the Agricultural Advisory and Economic Enhancement Committee approve the Terms of Reference, as presented.

## **CARRIED**

### **2. Review Strategies**

Agricultural Viability Strategy (AVS) – Provided on table.  
 Economic Development Strategy (EDS) – Can be provided electronically.

### **3. 2018 Work Program**

Staff presented the draft 2018 Work Plan for the committee's review and endorsement.

## **MOTION**

Moved by T. Knight,  
 Seconded by N. Killeen,  
 That the Agricultural Advisory and Economic Enhancement Committee endorse the 2018 Work Plan, as presented.

## **CARRIED**



**F. WORK PROGRAM**

**COUNCIL**

Moved by B. Sharp,  
Seconded by C. Clark,  
That the Agricultural Advisory and Economic Enhancement Committee  
recommends that Council endorse the 2018 Work Plan, presented as Attachment  
A.

**CARRIED**

**G. COUNCIL REFERRALS**

**H. OTHER BUSINESS AND ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

**1. 2018 Membership List**

Provided on table for information.

**2. 2018 Meeting Schedule**

Provided on table for information.

**3. Committee Photo**

A photo was taken for the Township website.

**N. NEXT MEETING**

**Date:** Wednesday, February 28, 2017

**Location:** Murray Creek Meeting Room  
4<sup>th</sup> Floor, 20338 – 65 Avenue

**Time:** 7:00 pm

**O. TERMINATE**

Moved by B. Sharp,  
Seconded by N. Killeen,  
That the meeting terminate at 9:10pm.

**CARRIED**

**CERTIFIED CORRECT:**

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Community Representative Co-Chair

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Council Representative Co-Chair



# MEMORANDUM

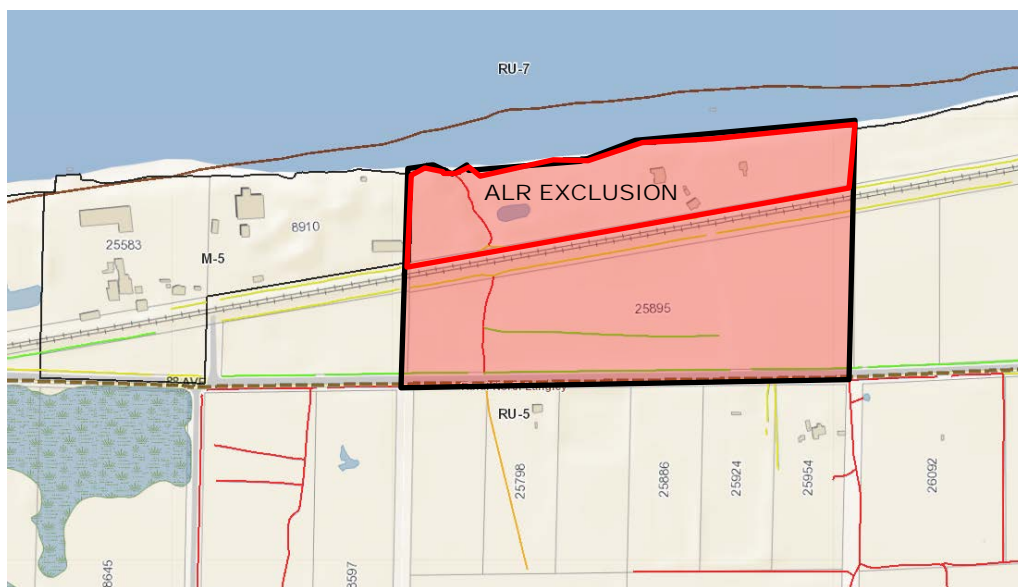
**TO:** AAEEC **DATE:** FEBRUARY 23, 2018

**FROM:** RUBY SANDHER, DEVELOPMENT PLANNER **FILE NO:** 11-36-0004

**SUBJECT:** AXON LUMBER/ 25895 – 88 AVENUE

## Background

Axon Lumber, currently located at 25583 88 Avenue, has applied for an Agriculture Land Reserve (ALR) exclusion pursuant to Section 20(1) of the Agricultural Land Commission Act to remove a 6.0 hectare (14.8 ac) portion of a 17.7 hectare (43.8 ac) site located at 28595 88 Avenue (east of the current lumber operations). The applicant indicates that they would like to use the smaller portion of the site, to the north of the railway line, to accommodate an expansion of the current lumber operations. The applicant would like to remediate the property (e.g., remove abandoned vehicles along the shoreline and the removal of other features associated with past boat building activities) and use this portion of the site as lumber storage. The larger portion, south of the railway line would remain in the ALR and would be used for farming purposes. Also, the applicant has indicated future plans to acquire the property at 8910 – 256 Street to also expand current operations.



As part of the ALR exclusion application, an Agricultural Site Assessment (ASA) was prepared for the applicant. This documentation indicates that the subject property was used for industrial purposes from 1966 -1992. Industrial activities were discontinued in 1992 following the destruction of the building. The documentation provided by the applicant (appraisal document March 7, 1977) states that the previous use contained a light industrial building, which was non-conforming under the ALR regulations, but continuance of the use was permitted until such time as activities ceased.

Lastly, based on the findings of the ASA, there are two small areas, with a total area of 1.44 hectares (3.56 acres) or 24 percent, on the site that are determined to currently be suitable for agricultural activities, for which minimal management inputs would be necessary to sustain productive crop growth. The remaining areas of the subject site – 76 percent – are either unsuitable for agricultural usage, or would require substantial monetary investment and consistent management inputs to be made suitable for such uses. This is particularly the case for the area along the eastern shoreline and in the area of the former boat manufacturing building.

### **Existing Policy Context**

The Township of Langley is a member municipality of the Metro Vancouver Regional District in the Province of British Columbia. Planning in the Township is guided by a multi-layered and multi-jurisdictional policy framework that provides direction for the use of land. The current policy framework, in general terms, identifies the subject site for 'agricultural uses', from the perspective of the Provincial ALR, the Metro Vancouver Regional Growth Strategy (RGS), the Township of Langley Official Community Plan (OCP), the Township's Rural Plan and Zoning Bylaw. The policy framework for the neighbouring two properties to the immediate west are designated as Agricultural for the existing lumber operations site and Rural for the pallet factory operations site in the RGS, are both designated Industrial in the OCP, are designated Agricultural / Countryside in the Rural Plan and both have an industrial zone (M-5) under the Zoning Bylaw. The areas to the east and south currently have similar designations and zoning as the subject site.

### **Industrialization of the Riverfront**

As illustrated on the attached Maps from the Metro Vancouver Regional Growth Strategy (RGS), uses along the Fraser River vary and include a mix of urban and non-urban designations, Industrial and Mixed Employment, Conservation & Recreation, Agricultural and Rural. The Fraser riverfront in the Township of Langley is predominantly Agricultural, with some Conservation and Recreation uses in the Derby Reach area and Industrial designations in the Port Kells area and a couple of modest locations east of Fort Langley. Adding an additional industrial site along the Fraser Riverfront could result in some impact to the agricultural character of the river shoreline in the Township. A more detailed impact and mitigation analysis, in addition to the ASA already provided by the proponent, may be warranted.

### **Floodplain and Potential for Flooding**

The subject site is located within the 7 metre floodplain level, which indicates that the area can be prone to flooding conditions, such as an unusually large spring freshet within the Fraser River watershed. There are no dykes in the immediate area. Given the presence of multiple watercourses discharging into the Fraser River along this stretch of the waterfront, dyke control

measures would be challenging to implement. Also, depending on the quantity of site improvements made to the subject site if an industrial use is approved – buildings, storage areas and infrastructure – it is possible that more financial investment is at risk to damage caused by flooding of the Fraser River than some types of farming activities. More detailed investigation would be required as part of a rezoning stage of an industrial development in order to identify possible mitigation measures. Section 105 of the Township's Zoning Bylaw would be the minimum in terms of flood control requirements.

Related, there is a 'red-coded' classification on a watercourse on the subject site. A full assessment by a qualified environmental professional would be need to be completed by the applicant as part of rezoning consideration. This assessment would provide confirmation of the watercourse classification and necessary buffers and setbacks as stipulated by Township's Streamside Protection Bylaw.

### **Mobility and Access**

Access to the subject property is likely from 88 Avenue, a designated Truck Route, and crossing(s) the railway line. This poses some challenges regarding the provision of adequate and durable truck and other lumber storage yard machinery access as well as appropriate emergency vehicle access. All necessary approvals would need to be secured from the rail company and the Township Fire Department, among others, as part of rezoning. Alternative access from and between the two properties to the west, over the watercourse (a.k.a., East Creek), and connecting to the subject site, could provide an alternative to frequent railway line crossings. Geotechnical, environmental and engineering analysis would need to be conducted in order to determine feasibility. Lastly, potential expansion of the lumber operations could result in increased truck traffic, possibly through the Fort Langley community. A traffic impact analysis would also likely be part of the rezoning stage.

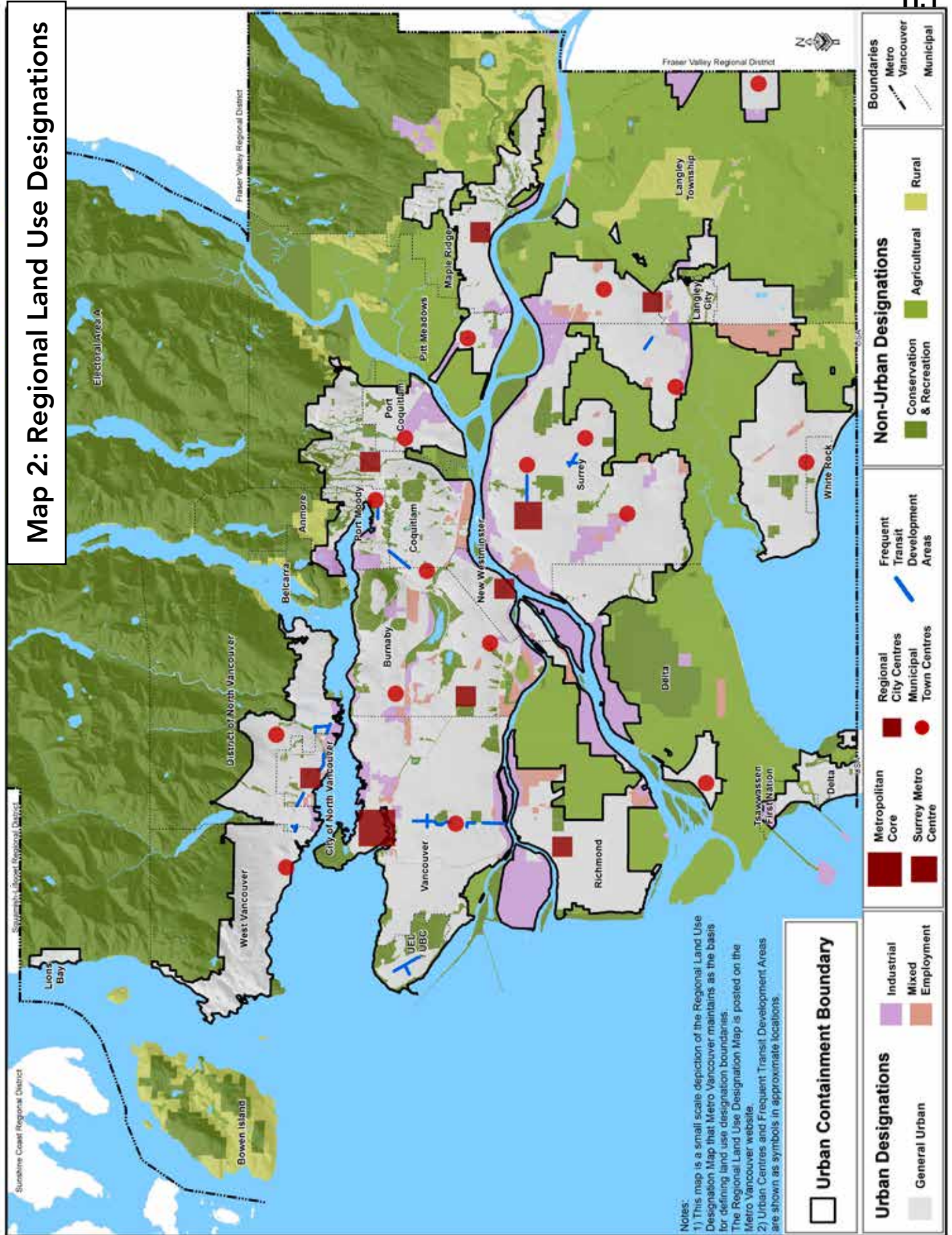
### **Experience the Fraser Concept Plan**

The Experience the Fraser (EFT) is a recreational, cultural and heritage project that extends along Lower Fraser River Corridor connecting Hope to the Salish Sea. The Concept Plan delineates a Trail route in order to provide part of the framework for the implementation of the project. The subject property is along the Trail route. Consideration of implementation of this project would be required as part of a rezoning.

### **Servicing**

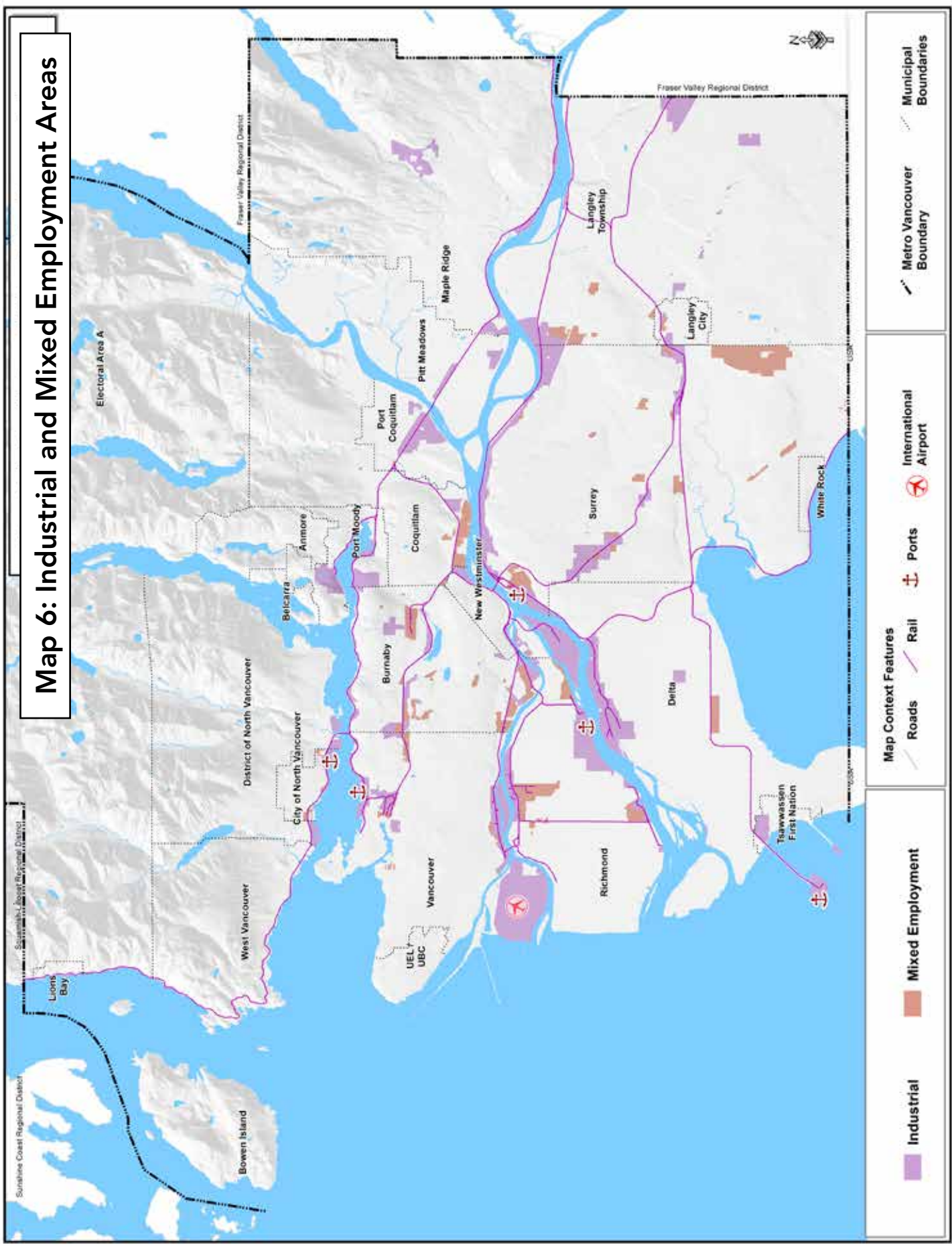
Full municipal services do not exist in this area and will need to be resolved at rezoning stage. The applicant has been informed about potential servicing and infrastructure upgrades that will be required and has provided the Township with documentation stating a willingness to comply with servicing requirements. Specific to fire protection, if an industrial development were to proceed on the subject site, includes installation of an on-site well water system to meet all requirements of Section 'W' of the Township's Subdivision and Development Servicing Bylaw and the Building Department such as but not limited to the following: domestic flow, fire flow and pressures, on-site storage and sprinkling requirements would need to be provided.

Map 2: Regional Land Use Designations





Map 6: Industrial and Mixed Employment Areas



Note: The depicted road network, rail lines, and port / airport transportation facilities are shown for reference only.

**Minister of Agriculture's Advisory Committee**  
**Revitalizing the Agricultural Land Reserve and the Agricultural Land Commission**  
**Discussion Paper for Stakeholder Consultation and Public Engagement**

**Minister of Agriculture's Advisory Committee**

The Minister of Agriculture, the Hon. Lana Popham, was tasked in her mandate letter with "Revitalizing the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) and the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC)". To deliver on this important commitment, the Minister established an independent advisory committee to provide the Province with strategic advice and policy guidance.

The Minister announced the Minister's Advisory Committee (Advisory Committee) members on January 4, 2018. The Advisory Committee has been tasked with delivering to the Minister a set of interim recommendations by spring 2018. The guiding principles for the Advisory Committee's work include:

- Focus on the future of the ALR and ALC
- Evaluate policy issues that inhibit the purposes of the ALR and ALC
- Evaluate what is working well
- Develop recommendations that:
  - work toward improving the purposes of the ALR and ALC;
  - clearly identify the issues, goals and objectives that will strengthen the ALR and ALC in pursuing the purposes;
  - suggest a strategy on how to achieve the goals and objectives;
  - include, where possible, data/information that validates the issue as defined; and,
  - are legally sound and are achievable.

**Stakeholder Consultation and Public Engagement**

The Advisory Committee is responsible for delivering recommendations through consultation and engagement with stakeholders and the general public, with secretariat support from the Ministry of Agriculture (the Ministry). In examining measures to revitalize the ALC and ALR, stakeholders and the public will be asked to consider the purpose of the ALC as set out in Section 6 of the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* (the Act):

- (a) to preserve agricultural land;
- (b) to encourage farming on agricultural land in collaboration with other communities of interest; and,
- (c) to encourage local governments, first nations, the government and its agents to enable and accommodate farm use of agricultural land and uses compatible with agriculture in their plans, bylaws and policies.

The Advisory Committee consultation and engagement activities in early 2018 will include:

- Providing this background Discussion Paper with a view of seeking opinions and feedback on issues that will lead to the revitalizing of the ALR and ALC;
- Regional meetings to hear opinions and feedback directly from key stakeholders in farming and ranching communities. Meetings are expected to be held in Abbotsford, Cranbrook, Fort St. John, Kelowna, Kamloops, Nanaimo and Prince George; and,
- An online consultation process/survey to seek opinion and feedback from other stakeholders and interested parties.

The Advisory Committee will use the consultation process, along with other information, to develop its recommendations to the Minister. The recommendations may include changes to the current legislative, regulatory, and administrative framework that guides the ALR and the ALC.

It should be noted that this Discussion Paper is intended to stimulate conversation during the consultation process. It is not intended to direct participants toward specific issues, questions or outcomes.

### **Revitalization Objectives**

To date, the Advisory Committee has identified three general objectives:

1. Preserve the productive capacity of land in the ALR;
2. Encourage farming of land in the ALR for uses related to agriculture and food production; and,
3. Strengthen the administration and governance of the ALR and ALC to both increase public confidence and to ensure that land use regulation and land use decisions are preserving agricultural land and encouraging farming and ranching in the ALR.

### **Common Issues/Themes**

Upholding the integrity of the ALR, the ALC and the agricultural land base is critical. This conversation seeks to ensure there is a legacy of farmland for future generations of British Columbians. Common issues and themes raised to date include:

#### **1. A Defensible and Defended ALR:**

During the past 45 years, the ALR boundary has been refined through early boundary reviews, local government land use planning exercises and over 48,000 individual applications. The ALR boundary is often viewed as temporary and adjustable. The perspective that the ALR is available for urban uses perpetuates land use pressure on farmland. Continued speculation of this nature results in a focus on applications made by individual landowners to modify the ALR and detracts from pro-active work such as focussing on regional-level land use planning, analysis of permitted uses and the preservation and encouraging farm use mandate.



## 2. ALR Resilience:

Pressure for non-agricultural uses persists on the ALR land base and on the administrative body (the ALC) that oversees it. The ALR, ALC, and agriculture in BC should be stable and resilient for generations to come.

## 3. Stable Governance:

The ALC governance and decision making model can be easily changed through legislative amendments and changing government direction. The ALC's independence is often threatened from interests outside of the ALC. Independence is vital to strengthening the ALC and ALR into the future. More information about ALC governance can be found on the [ALC Operations & Governance](#) webpage.

## 4. Efficacy of Zone 1 and 2:

The passage of Bill 24 in May 2014 introduced amendments to the Act that included the division of the ALR into Zone 1 and Zone 2.

Zone 1: Includes Vancouver Island, South Coast, and Okanagan Panel regions.

Zone 2: Includes Interior, Kootenay, and North Panel regions.

In Zone 1, land use decisions are based on the agricultural purposes of the ALC laid out in section 6 of the ALC Act. The Act considers preservation of agricultural land, encouraging farming in collaboration with other communities of interest; and encourages local governments, First Nations, and other agencies to enable farm use and uses compatible with agriculture in their plans, bylaws and policies.

In Zone 2, the Commission is required to consider the agricultural purposes of the Commission (Section 6 of the Act as identified above), as well as Section 4.3 of the Act pertaining to economic, cultural and social values, and regional and community planning objections.

More information about Bill 24 amendments can be found on the [ALC Act and ALR Regulation](#) webpage. For example, the Regulation was amended to include additional uses that allow a residential lease for a retiring farmer to remain on their property subject to conditions, and to allow a second single family dwelling if the property is at least 50 hectares and subject to conditions of siting of structures.

## 5. Interpretation/Implementation of the Act and Regulation:

As drafted, parts of the Act and Agricultural Land Reserve Use, Subdivision and Procedure Regulation (the Regulation) are 'permissive', which means that it lists the activities that are permitted in the ALR without requiring approval of the ALC; it does not list what activities are not permitted. In some instances, definitions, criteria, thresholds, and intent of the Act and Regulation are interpreted differently by local governments, ALR land owners, farmers and ranchers and the general public across the province. There is a need for clearer regulations and consistency in interpretation. The ALC is not aware when a permitted activity takes place or when a permitted activity is misinterpreted.

## 6. Food Security and BC's Agricultural Contribution:

Concern over the source and quality of food we eat has raised public attention to the issue of food security and to the long-term ability of the ALR to provide a safe and adequate agricultural land base to accommodate continuous, secure food production for domestic consumption and export. Often agriculture's vital role in the BC economy and the potential for export and trade opportunities is forgotten in the discussion around competing land uses. More information on BC's Agrifood and Seafood Sector contributions can be found on the Ministry of Agriculture's Agriculture and Seafood Statistics webpage.

## 7. Residential Uses in the ALR:

Additional dwellings, farm worker housing, "mega homes" and 'lifestyle estates' in the ALR occupy agricultural land. In some circumstances additional dwellings are necessary for intensive agricultural operations; however there is also demand on the ALR for additional dwellings solely for residential purposes. When there is a subdivision of ALR land, it is usually for development of another parcel and residence. In addition, the large footprint occupied by "mega homes" and acreages purchased for lifestyle estates (with little or no agricultural production) has raised concerns about use of arable land for housing and increased residential assessment values of ALR land. While not currently legislated provincially, some local governments have adopted restrictions on sizing and siting of residential uses in the ALR.

## 8. Farm Processing and Sales in the ALR:

The Regulation permits landowners in the ALR to process and retail farm products on a parcel of land subject to criteria that attempts to ensure that the product is associated with the farm or a registered co-operative. The Regulation affords farmers and ranchers the ability to produce "value added" products (e.g. berry processing, alcohol production, farm stands). Processing and retail facilities range in size and sometimes incorporate other ancillary uses such as parking lots, food services, patios, galleries, event spaces, meeting rooms, etc.; however, there is concern that some facilities are occupying large areas of arable ALR land with little connection to agricultural production on the farm. There is also concern that ALR land is purchased for the other ancillary permitted uses, but there is no agricultural production (i.e. building a retail store with extremely limited farm products for sale).

## 9. Unauthorized Uses:

Agricultural land is sometimes used for unauthorized non-agricultural uses and some landowners expand beyond what is permitted. ALC Compliance and Enforcement officers currently handle between 300 to 400 files annually related to complaints, investigations, or actions on unauthorized uses. Some of these unauthorized uses include illegal filling (e.g. dumping soil, construction waste, concrete), commercial uses (e.g. commercial truck parking, recreational vehicle storage, scrap vehicle yards), and residential uses (e.g. additional dwellings). These activities may directly damage the agricultural land base and in some cases the damage is permanent. These activities can sometimes be more damaging to agricultural land than applications for exclusion considered by and approved by the ALC.

## 10. Non–Farm Uses and Resource Extraction in the ALR:

Other activities, from agri-tourism and agri-tourism accommodation to resource extraction such as oil and gas and aggregate (sand and gravel) can take place in the ALR. Concerns about cumulative impacts of these activities and remediation of agricultural land have been raised.

### Background

BC's current approach to the ALR attempts to balance the needs of farmers and ranchers to carry out their daily work with the need for land use decision-making that best supports Government's goals and objectives for the ALR.

### The ALR

The ALR was a bold initiative in 1973 that acknowledged that BC has a limited agricultural land resource which should be available for current and future generations of farmers and ranchers to operate agricultural businesses for local consumption and export. Soil is most fertile in valley bottoms where other competing land uses including urban development also take place. The ALR was established in the face of rapidly expanding urban areas and non-farm development in rural areas.

Approximately five percent of BC's land base is within the ALR, a provincial zone within which agriculture is recognized as the priority activity. The ALR includes public (Crown) and privately held land in all regions of the province.



## The ALC

The ALC is an independent administrative tribunal dedicated to preserving agricultural land and encouraging farming in BC. The ALC occupies a distinctive role within the Canadian legal system. While it is part of “government” broadly defined, it is not part of any government ministry. The ALC is instead part of the Canadian community of independent administrative tribunals, vested with important statutory powers, whose members are obliged to exercise those statutory powers in accordance with the law.

The *Agricultural Land Commission Act* (the Act) empowers the ALC to delegate certain decision making powers, allowing local government and other authorities to make non-farm land use and subdivision decisions in the ALR. For more information, see the [ALC Delegation of Decision Making](#) webpage.

The ALC has been preserving agricultural lands for 45 years through its land use planning work with local governments and decision making on land use applications. The ALR forms the foundation for the business of agriculture in BC. When the ALR was designated it was done so with a long-term focus knowing that pressures on this limited resource would only increase with time. The ALR and the ALC enjoy strong and consistent public support.

The ALC is mandated to encourage others, including the provincial government and its agents, to take the interests of the ALR and agriculture into account when generating new policies, participating in land use planning initiatives, changing legislation and regulation, and planning for future developments.

Government ministries and agencies can have considerable impact on agricultural land through such things as transportation planning, wildlife habitat management and conservation, forest and water management and energy planning. Accordingly, the ALC is both proactive and collaborative in working with ministries, supporting and helping them to implement their plans, bylaws and policies to enable and accommodate farm use of agricultural land and/or to support uses compatible with agriculture.

As set out in the Act, Commissioners are individuals knowledgeable in agriculture, land use planning and local and First Nations governments, and are supported by an ALC staff secretariat to carry out Commissioners duties under the Act.

## The Legislation

The *Agricultural Land Commission Act* (the Act) sets the legislative framework for the establishment, administration, and procedures of BC's agricultural land preservation program. The Act is the high-level statute that sets out principles and broad rules for the protection of agricultural land in BC. The Act takes precedence over, but does not replace other legislation and bylaws that may apply to the land. Local and regional governments, as well as other provincial agencies, are expected to plan and make decisions in accordance with the provincial policy of preserving agricultural land.

While the purpose of the Act has remained generally the same with some minor changes over 45 years, there have been a series of major changes to the Act and Regulation as well as the ALC's structure and operations over the past 3.5 years. For more information about these changes, please see the [ALC Act and ALR Regulation](#) webpage.

### **The Regulation**

[The Regulation](#) identifies specific land uses allowable on farmland in the ALR without an application to the ALC. Current examples include such things as growing plants and raising animals, putting up buildings necessary for farm use, selling agricultural products direct to the public as well as specified farm and non-farm activities such as the construction of buildings for alcohol production, farm product processing, agri-tourism activities, gatherings for events, agri-tourism accommodation, additional dwellings, home based businesses, composting operations, deposition of fill and removal of soil, and others. The Regulation is a permissive regulation, meaning that it lists the activities that are permitted in the ALR without requiring approval of the Commission. Any activities not permitted by the Regulation require an application to and approval of the ALC.

The Regulation also sets out the process for making an application to include and exclude land from the ALR, use ALR land for activities not permitted in the Regulation and subdivide land within the ALR. The Ministry maintains the Act and the Regulation.

### **Local Governments and the ALR**

Approximately 150 BC local governments have lands in the ALR, some extensive, and others not. Local governments play an important role in enabling farm businesses to thrive on protected farmlands, therefore contributing to the local, regional and provincial economy. The ALC supports coordinated and collaborative planning with local governments to ensure agricultural lands are protected and available to provide food and other agricultural products for generations to come.

Through the *Local Government Act* (LGA) and the *Community Charter*, which fall under the responsibility of the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, the Province has delegated community planning and zoning bylaw powers to local governments, provided they are consistent with the Act and the Regulation. For more information, see the [ALC Working with Local Government](#) webpage.

### **Public Feedback**

The Minister of Agriculture has directed the Advisory Committee to consider the future of BC's land base for agriculture and farming, fairly and without bias, in order to improve the ALR and the ALC. While the ALR and the ALC generally enjoy strong public support, the issues, themes and information in this Discussion Paper highlight some of the areas for improvement and for strengthening BC's agricultural land preservation system.

On behalf of the Advisory Committee, the Ministry of Agriculture will provide further information to the public through news releases during the stakeholder consultation and public engagement process. Feedback from stakeholders and the public will help the Advisory Committee provide substantive recommendations to the Province for revitalizing the ALR and the ALC. For questions about how to provide input and feedback, please email [ALR\\_ALCRevitalization@gov.bc.ca](mailto:ALR_ALCRevitalization@gov.bc.ca).

#### Written Submissions

In addition to regional stakeholder consultation meetings, there are several ways to provide written feedback to the Advisory Committee by:

- Mail:
  - Minister's Advisory Committee
  - Revitalization of ALR and ALC
  - C/o Ministry of Agriculture
  - PO Box 9120
  - Stn. Prov. Govt.
  - Victoria BC V8W 9B4
- Email: [ALR\\_ALCRevitalization@gov.bc.ca](mailto:ALR_ALCRevitalization@gov.bc.ca)
- Online survey: An online survey will be initiated in February 2018 to seek feedback from the general public.

## Appendix 1 – Ministry of Agriculture News Release

For Immediate Release

2018AGRI0002-000009

Jan. 4, 2018

Ministry of Agriculture – NEWS RELEASE

B.C. farmers, communities, public to shape revitalization of the Agricultural Land Reserve

VICTORIA - An independent committee with members from diverse agricultural backgrounds and experiences will lead the revitalization of the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) and the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) through an authentic and meaningful consultation process with stakeholders and British Columbians, Minister of Agriculture Lana Popham announced today.

"I am proud and grateful to have attracted British Columbians with the knowledge, expertise, passion and experience that the committee members possess for agriculture," said Popham. "The ALR and the ALC are incredibly important to the health and economic well-being of our province's future, and making it easier and more efficient for the commission to fulfill its mandate of protecting farmland and encouraging farming is a commitment the B.C. government is delivering on."

The nine-member Minister of Agriculture's Advisory Committee will provide strategic advice, policy guidance, and recommendations on how to help revitalize the ALR and ALC to ensure the provincial goals of preserving agricultural land and encouraging farming and ranching in British Columbia continue to be a priority. The committee will be chaired by Jennifer Dyson, with members from throughout the province with diverse agricultural knowledge and experience.

"As we embark on this consultation, our collective mandate is to ensure that the ALC and agriculture is positioned for the future," said Dyson. "I am asking that each of our review committee members listen to what is being said, honestly, impartially, professionally and in a principled fashion. I am looking forward to the conversations."

Beginning in early 2018, the committee will:

- Share a consultation paper to seek opinions and feedback on revitalizing the ALR and ALC;
- Host regional meetings to hear opinions and feedback directly from the local farming and ranching communities in Abbotsford, Cranbrook, Fort St. John, Kelowna, Kamloops, Nanaimo and Prince George; and
- Open an online consultation process to seek public opinion.

The committee will use the input it receives during the consultation process to develop recommendations for the provincial government's consideration. The recommendations may include changes to the current legislative, regulatory, and administrative framework to revitalize the ALR and the ALC. Any legislative changes that support the revitalization of the commission and the reserve are targeted for late 2018 or early 2019.

The ministerial mandate letter for the Minister of Agriculture identifies as a priority the revitalization of the Agricultural Land Reserve and the Agricultural Land Commission, an independent administrative tribunal dedicated to preserving agricultural land and encouraging farming and ranching in British Columbia.

Contact:

Dave Townsend

Government Communications and Public Engagement Ministry of Agriculture

250 356-7098

250 889-5945 (cell)



## Appendix 2 – Minister’s Advisory Committee Members: Biographies

### Jennifer Dyson (Chair)

Jennifer Dyson has been involved in many aspects of agriculture; as a producer, consultant, chair, commissioner and industry member. Dyson has participated in the Partnership Committee on Agriculture and the Environment, Environmental Farm Plan Working Group, and Island Agri-Food Initiative. She was appointed to the Agricultural Land Commission in 2008 and served as chair of the Island Panel until 2017. Dyson served the agriculture industry, province and federal government as the executive director of the Agricultural Workforce Policy Board formed to respond to human resources challenges. Dyson was one of a handful of people who formed the Island Farmers Alliance and served as the Western Women’s representative appointed by the BC Agriculture Council to the Canadian Federation of Agriculture. Dyson and her family operate an innovative water buffalo dairy and direct farm market in the Alberni Valley.

### Vicki Huntington

Victoria Huntington is a native of Vancouver and has a degree in political science. She spent much of her early career in the RCMP security service and subsequently working with ministers of the Crown in Ottawa. She served five terms as an elected councillor in the municipality of Delta. Huntington was elected as an Independent MLA for Delta South in May 2009 and re-elected in May 2013. She was the first Independent elected to the BC Legislature in over 60 years and her re-election as an Independent is a first in modern BC political history. She recently retired in 2017. Huntington served as band manager for the Gitanmaax Indian Reserve in Hazelton, subsequently becoming a policy assistant to the federal Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. She was vice-chair of the Lower Mainland Treaty Advisory Committee (LMTAC) and its representative on the Provincial Treaty Negotiating Team. Huntington has shown a particular interest in environmental and agricultural matters.

### Chief Byron Louis

Chief Byron Louis has over 25 years of knowledge and experience, at various levels of the political spectrum. First, elected to Council in 1991, then designated as chair of the Okanagan Nation Fisheries Commission in 1995 and as a title and rights advisor at the Tribal Council and regional level, and political liaison designate with U.S.-based tribal, public and private utilities (hydroelectric generation) and state and federal authorities. Over the course of his career he has served in various facets of political office involving natural resource management, economic development, public works, community planning, liaison and strategic development and negotiation with various levels of senior government and the private sector. Louis continues to work extensively on First Nations social and economic issues and interests and is currently Ministry of Agriculture serving his fourth term as Chief of the Okanagan Indian Band. In 2015, he took on the role of director with the New Relationship Trust, an independent non-profit organization dedicated to strengthening First Nations in BC through capacity building.

### Lenore Newman

Lenore Newman holds a Canada Research chair in Food Security and Environment at the University of the Fraser Valley, where she is an associate professor in the department of geography and the environment and the director of the Centre for Food and Farmland Innovation. She runs a research program focused on farmland preservation, agriculture on the rural/urban fringe, culinary development, and food innovation, and consults widely on how to protect the world's farmland while growing the agricultural industry. Her opinion pieces on the future of farmland use and other food-related issues have been published in the *Globe and Mail*, the *Vancouver Sun*, and the *Georgia Straight*. Her first book, *Speaking in Cod Tongues: A Canadian Culinary Journey*, was published in 2017. She holds a PhD in environmental studies from York University. Newman is a member of the Royal Society of Canada's New College, and the patron of the Newman Heritage Farm. She splits her time between Vancouver and the Sunshine Coast.

### Chris Kloot

Chris Kloot was born and raised on a dairy farm in Chilliwack. Today, with his wife and sons, he owns and operates a poultry farm in Rosedale, just east of Chilliwack. Recently, the pair became partners in the purchase of a vacant dairy farm with the intent to branch into dairy farming, as all three of their sons work on dairy farms and display a natural affinity for the industry. Kloot is also a real estate agent, and is serving his first term on Chilliwack City Council. His tremendous passion for agriculture has been recognized by the council. Kloot is the chair of the city's Agricultural and Rural Advisory Committee and was instrumental in the implementation of the Farm Home Plate bylaw in 2017. He is a member of the Chilliwack Agricultural Commission and devoted to the promotion and success of agriculture and agri-business in Chilliwack. You may recognize him as one of the lead roles in the flashy humorous action trailer of the "Chicken Squad", a savvy innovative online marketing campaign to promote BC Chicken and share accurate facts to educate consumers about Canadian chicken growing practices. This was produced in 2014 by the BC Chicken Marketing Board and BC Chicken Growers Association.

### Shaundehl Runka

Shaundehl Runka has worked in land-use planning and resource management in British Columbia since the early 1990s. With a background in geography, Runka operated as a consultant dealing with a broad range of land- and water-use issues, across all regions of the province. In 2001, Runka joined the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) as a policy analyst, ending her career there in early 2017 in the policy planner position. Runka gained extensive experience interpreting the *Agricultural Land Commission Act*, regulation and policies and in working with Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) stakeholders throughout the province on a day-to-day basis. During her tenure at the ALC, she participated in legislative and regulatory reviews and carried out an extensive re-write of ALC policies to reflect government direction and the commission mandate. Runka was raised in the Okanagan Valley, has lived in Vancouver for

30 years and is co-owner of a family farm in Baldonnel in the Peace region. Her professional life has taken her to all regions of the province.

### Irmi Critcher

Irmi Critcher and her husband Barry own and operate a first generation grain and oilseed farm.

The 1,600 hectare farm is located near Taylor, in the Peace River District. Critcher has always taken a very active role on the farm and jointly manages it with her husband. They have been farming for over 25 years and grow wheat, barley, oats, canola, peas and grass seeds. Critcher has been the past president of the BC Grain Producer's Association and has held director positions on provincial and federal agriculture Industry boards including the BC Grain Industry Development Council, Investment Ag Foundation and Grain Growers of Canada. She has chaired numerous committees within these associations including Localized Crop Research, Environment and Climate Action Initiatives.

### Arzeena Hamir

Arzeena Hamir is a farmer and agronomist from the Comox Valley. She earned her bachelor's degree in crop science from the University of Guelph and her master's degree in Sustainable Agriculture from the University of London, England. In 2007, she spoke at her first city council meeting to save the Garden City Lands in Richmond. Since then, she has advocated for community food security, farmland conservation and supports for new farmers. She is currently president of the Mid Island Farmers Institute and a director of the Investment Agriculture Foundation.

### Brian Underhill

Brian Underhill worked in varying capacities at the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) since 1980 and most recently, he was the ALC's deputy chief executive officer, before retiring in 2015. In his leadership role, Underhill was responsible for the management and administration of the ALC staff secretariat which included functions related to land-use planning, policy development and interpretation, as well as compliance and enforcement and land information services. Underhill worked closely with the chair of the ALC and its appointed commissioners, providing strategic advice and recommended courses of action. He also performed statutory land-use decision-making duties, consultation and co-ordination with local governments throughout the province and collaboration with provincial government ministries, agencies and other administrative tribunals to ensure consistency between policies and legislation and community and regional planning and the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* and regulations. By way of his experience at the Agricultural Land Commission, his background in geography and resource management studies and extensive travel throughout the province, Underhill has developed considerable knowledge of land-use issues in relation to community planning and the agriculture industry. Underhill resides in Vancouver and has a special interest in promoting education and awareness of farmland protection and how it is related to the provincial policy to preserve agricultural land and encourage farming throughout British Columbia.

### Appendix 3 – Background Information

- Farm Credit Canada Reports

<https://www.fcc-fac.ca/en/about-fcc/governance/reports/2016-fcc-farmland-values-report.html>

- ALC Annual Reports

<https://www.alc.gov.bc.ca/alc/content/library/commission-reports>

- ALC Act and the ALR Regulation and Recent Amendments

<https://www.alc.gov.bc.ca/alc/content/legislation-regulation/the-alc-act-and-alr-regulation>

- ALC's Delegation of Decision Making

<https://www.alc.gov.bc.ca/alc/content/about-the-alc/working-with-local-governments/delegation-to-local-governments>

- ALC's Working with Local Governments

<https://www.alc.gov.bc.ca/alc/content/about-the-alc/working-with-local-governments>

- ALC website Library

<https://www.alc.gov.bc.ca/alc/content/library>

- ALR Values and Benefits

<https://www.alc.gov.bc.ca/alc/content/alr-maps/living-in-the-alr/alr-values-and-benefits>