



To: Planning Committee Date: April 24, 2012

From: Brian J. Jackson File:
 Acting General Manager, Planning & Development

Re: **AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE 2011 ANNUAL REPORT AND
 2012 WORK PROGRAM**

Staff Recommendation

That the 2012 Agricultural Advisory Committee work program be approved.

Brian J. Jackson, MCIP
 Acting General Manager, Planning and Development

Att.

FOR ORIGINATING DIVISION USE ONLY		
<i>ACT 106</i> CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER 		
REVIEWED BY TAG	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
REVIEWED BY CAO	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>

Staff Report

Origin

The Richmond Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC) was established in 2003 upon completion of the Richmond Agricultural Viability Strategy (RAVS). A primary role of the AAC is to provide advice from an agricultural perspective to Council, City staff and other stakeholders on a range of issues and projects that impact agricultural activities in Richmond and to help implement recommendations contained in the RAVS.

This report summarizes the activities of the AAC in 2011 and recommends a 2012 work plan for Council consideration and approval.

Summary of 2011 Annual Report and Proposed 2012 Work Program

2011 Annual Report

Highlights of AAC activities in 2011 is summarized as follows (refer to **Attachment 1** for a detailed summary):

- Reviewed and provided comments on a variety of development proposals in and adjacent to the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) relating to buffering developments (residential and industrial) adjacent to agricultural areas, proposed soil fill operations and other ALR applications related to non-farm uses and minor ALR exclusions.
- Received updates from staff on various policy planning initiatives and provided feedback when necessary (i.e., 2041 OCP Update, Richmond Agricultural Viability Strategy Update).
- Provided feedback on documents and initiatives being undertaken by the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands and Metro Vancouver along with regulations being implemented that impact agricultural areas and/or activities.
- Received regular updates on major projects within the ALR and other infrastructure works related to improving agricultural viability throughout the City.

Proposed AAC 2012 Work Program

Highlights of the AAC 2012 Work Program is summarized as follows (refer to **Attachment 2** for a summary):

- Review and comment on development proposals in and adjacent to the ALR, forwarded to the AAC by City staff.
- Organize and host a Farm Tour in early fall 2012 to highlight agricultural related projects, initiatives and issues in Richmond with the objective of promoting agricultural awareness and education.
- Continue to provide feedback for ongoing policy initiatives (i.e., 2041 OCP Update; Richmond Agricultural Viability Strategy Update) and any new agricultural policy works that arise.
- Comment and receive regular updates on major projects and operational issues that enhance agricultural viability (i.e., drainage/irrigation) or impact use of agricultural land (i.e., road improvement projects).

AAC Review of the Richmond Agricultural Viability Strategy

Through the 2041 OCP Update, the AAC undertook a comprehensive review of the Richmond Agricultural Viability Strategy (RAVS), including the Strategy's 64 recommendations through 2011 and early 2012. The reason for the review was that it has been nine years since Council approved the RAVS in 2003 and it is important for the AAC to review progress and examine existing recommendations in the Strategy and their priority moving forward and ensure coordination with the 2041 OCP update. A consolidated list of comments and feedback to update the RAVS has been agreed to by the AAC. Staff are currently working to update the RAVS and anticipate a report will be forwarded to Council for consideration by July 2012.

Financial Impact


None.

Conclusion

The 2011 Annual Report for the AAC is submitted for information purposes and a work program for 2012 is recommended for approval.



Terry Crowe
Manager, Policy Planning



Kevin Eng
Planner 1

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**2011 ANNUAL REPORT
AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Agricultural Advisory Committee 2011 Accomplishments

Projects	Results Expected	Accomplishments and Comments
Major Development Proposals	Agricultural perspective and advice to Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewed 7 development proposals related to proposed road opening in the ALR; developing buffers and review of adjacencies between residential and industrial project adjacent to agricultural lands; minor ALR exclusion; non-farm use proposals involving soil fill.
Richmond Policy Initiatives	Agricultural perspective and advise to Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertook a comprehensive review of the Richmond Agricultural Viability Strategy and related 64 recommendations to update the Strategy based on comments and priorities identified and agreed to by the AAC. Received regular updates on the 2041 OCP Update. Received zoning information updates to clarify accessory uses (i.e., tennis court) as an accessory structure. Preliminary feedback on the existing No. 5 Road Backlands Policy. Provided feedback on new zoning regulations proposed for farm-based wineries. Provided feedback on Richmond protocol for telecommunications antenna and required consultation.
External Agency Policy Initiatives Requests for Feedback	Provide agricultural comments and perspectives to the agency (through council) when requested.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewed and commented on the Ministry of Agriculture and Land initiative to review residential uses in the ALR and ultimate residential bylaw standard guideline developed by the Ministry.
Drainage/Irrigation Program for Agricultural Areas	Provide comments from an agricultural perspective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Received regular updates from Engineering Planning and Public Works on drainage and irrigation works undertaken in 2011 based on the approved Agricultural Drainage/Irrigation program in East Richmond. Information provided on available funding, proposed design/scope of works and construction timing and progress.
Major Transportation Projects	Provide comments and feedback from an agricultural perspective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Received regular construction updates on the Nelson Road Interchange project until completion and opening in late summer 2011. Received updates and provided feedback on the proposed works to widen Nelson Road (b/w Blundell Road and Westminster Highway) and Westminster Highway (b/w Nelson Road and McMillan Way).

Projects	Results Expected	Accomplishments and Comments
Public Awareness and Local Food Initiatives	Improved awareness and understanding of agriculture and its role in the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Received information about the demand for residents in Richmond and Vancouver as well as other institutions looking for vacant, available farmland to undertake a variety of agricultural activities ranging from small plot agriculture to incubator plots for new farmers. Support provided to the Richmond Food Security Society to pursue grant funding to develop a "Richmond Foodlands Strategic Plan". Received information on local food events and initiatives as well as Provincial programs aimed at promoting and marketing BC agricultural products.
General Agricultural Related Issues	Identify specific projects and initiatives that impact agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Received updates on activities of the Metro Vancouver Agricultural Advisory Committee. Received updates on the progress of the Metro Vancouver Regional Growth Strategy.

List of Development Proposals Reviewed in 2011

Application No.	Address of property	Proposed use
N/A	13160 Westminster Highway	Non-farm use proposal involving fill.
DP 11-566011)	Ecowaste industrial lands (East Richmond)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal to open roads in and adjacent to the ALR to service the proposed light industrial development. Proposed ALR landscape screen to buffer industrial land uses from adjacent agricultural land.
DP 11-584282	9791/9811 Ferndale Road & 6071 to 6131 No. 4 Road	Landscape buffer screen for a multi-family residential development adjacent to the ALR.
AG 11-579881	16880 Westminster Highway	Non-farm use to permit an accessory food and beverage service lounge to the existing farm-based winery facility.
DP 10-556907	6311 to 6371 No. 4 Road	Landscape buffer screen for a multi-family residential development adjacent to the ALR.
AG 10-556907	11120 & 11200 No. 5 Road	Minor ALR exclusion for a commercial development at the southeast corner of Steveston Highway and No. 5 Road.
N/A	21660 River Road	Non-farm use proposal involving fill.

**AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
2012 WORK PROGRAM**

AAC Role in the Work Program

- Provide comments and feedback, from an agricultural perspective, to Richmond City Council and staff on works and services, development and major projects being undertaken in and adjacent to the ALR.
- Receive for information, reports and materials forwarded from external agencies (Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, Metro Vancouver, ALC, NGO etc.). Provide comments and feedback (through Council) when requested.
- Participate in public meetings and consult on work program projects.
- Continue to improve local agricultural awareness and education initiatives and take the lead role in organizing agricultural showcase events (i.e., Farm Tours).
- Receive regular updates on projects and works related to agriculture.
- Ensure that all City Divisions liaise with the AAC as early as possible on works deemed to have an impact on farming so that the Committee can be consulted. These proactive initiatives will help to inform agricultural stakeholders of forthcoming works and enable comments and feedback to be given where appropriate.

AAC Proposed 2012 Work Program

The following items are proposed to comprise the AAC work program for 2012

Projects	Results Expected	Objectives and Deliverables
Major Development Projects	Agricultural perspective and advice to Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review development proposals forwarded to the AAC from Council or staff. • Ensure that the AAC is aware of all works (existing and proposed) in the ALR so that agricultural impacts can be examined and comments given where appropriate. • Request monitoring of Westminster Highway traffic by Transportation in response to opening of the Nelson Road interchange in summer of 2011 and follow-up with related projects (i.e., improved transit infrastructure along Westminster Highway). • Continue to receive updates and provide feedback to the City's project team for the Nelson Road and Westminster Highway widening project. • Review and comment on non-farm use (soil fill) applications forwarded to the AAC by Community Bylaw staff. Provide support to Community Bylaws and ALC staff to prevent unnecessary placement of fill on agricultural land.

Projects	Results Expected	Objectives and Deliverables
Richmond Policy Updates and Initiatives	Agricultural perspective and input	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide comments on the OCP 2041 update as required along with other concurrent policy studies and documents related to the update (i.e., ESA Update). • Receive, for information purposes, the updated Richmond Agricultural Viability Strategy and recommendations based on AAC comments provided previously.
Drainage and Irrigation	Agricultural perspective and input	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receive regularly scheduled updates on funding, design and construction for proposed works in 2012 and 2013 related to agricultural drainage and irrigation. • For 2012, review proposed drainage and irrigation works involving: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Granville Road allowance between Sidaway to No. 6 Road. • Sidaway culvert crossing. • No. 8 Road lift station. • Engineering to undertake additional modelling based on existing works completed since the drainage/irrigation program was initiated in 2006 to help inform future projects. • Works are guided by the East Richmond Agricultural Water Supply Study.
Public Awareness and Local Food Initiatives	Improved awareness and understanding of agriculture and its role in the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to receive information on and promote local food events and initiatives. • Organize and host a Farm Tour tentatively scheduled for early September 2012
Agricultural Data System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update agriculture related statistics based on current data figures. • Identify latest trends related to agriculture and how they impact the Richmond Agricultural Viability Strategy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City staff to obtain latest information from various sources and report trends and findings to the AAC for information purposes. • Obtain updated land use inventory data from 2010 study undertaken by Ministry of Ag. & Lands/Metro Vancouver staff.

Projects	Results Expected	Results Expected
General Agricultural Initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• AAC perspective and input.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Where necessary, support the Richmond Food Security Society to develop a "Richmond Foodlands Strategic Plan" as a resource to help identify vacant agricultural land for farm use (i.e., small plot agriculture, incubator plots)
Agricultural Advisory Committee Membership review	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• AAC perspective and input.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review committee membership and composition in conjunction with meeting operations.• Report to Council on any recommended changes to AAC membership composition if needed.