



To: Planning Committee **Date:** November 6, 2017
From: Terry Crowe, MCIP **File:** 08-4050-10/2017-Vol
01
Re: **Proposed Terms of Reference to Update Richmond's 2003 Agricultural Viability Strategy (AVS) and Agricultural Profile**

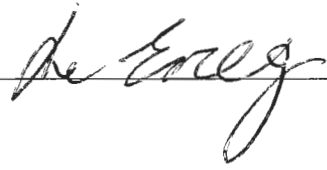

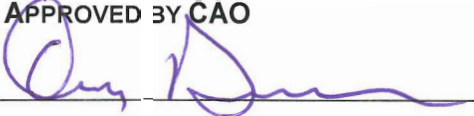
Staff Recommendation

That the report titled "Proposed Terms of Reference to Update Richmond's 2003 Agricultural Viability Strategy (AVS) and Agricultural Profile" dated November 6, 2017 from the Manager, Policy Planning, be received for information."



Terry Crowe, MCIP
 Manager, Policy Planning

Att.4

REPORT CONCURRENCE		
ROUTED TO:	CONCURRENCE	CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER
Economic Development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Engineering	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Development Applications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Transportation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Community Bylaw	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Parks	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Sustainability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
REVIEWED BY STAFF REPORT / AGENDA REVIEW SUBCOMMITTEE	INITIALS: 	APPROVED BY CAO 

Staff Report

Origin

This report responds to the following Council referral from the June 26, 2017 meeting:

“That staff prepare a report, in consultation with the Richmond Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC), which proposes a work program, to update the existing Agricultural Viability Strategy and Profile, for Council’s approval by December 2017, which is to include:

- (1) Terms of Reference, to complete the Strategy and Profile;*
- (2) the 2016 Census statistics and related information;*
- (3) policies to address City agricultural viability opportunities and challenges including land use, and infrastructure (e.g., drainage);*
- (4) any needed improved City farm and non-farm development application regulations (e.g., zoning, soil fill);*
- (5) a stakeholder and public consultation process; and*
- (6) a budget which may include consultants.”*

This report supports the following Council 2014-2018 Term Goals:

- #3 A Well-Planned Community:

Adhere to effective planning and growth management practices to maintain and enhance the livability, sustainability and desirability of our City and its neighbourhoods, and to ensure the results match the intentions of our policies and bylaws.

3.1. Growth and development that reflects the OCP, and related policies and bylaws.

3.3. Effective transportation and mobility networks.

- #4 Leadership in Sustainability:

Continue advancement of the City’s sustainability framework and initiatives to improve the short and long term livability of our City, and that maintain Richmond’s position as a leader in sustainable programs, practices and innovations.

4.1. Continued implementation of the sustainability framework.

4.2. Innovative projects and initiatives to advance sustainability.

- #8 Supportive Economic Development Environment:

Review, develop and implement plans, policies, programs and practices to increase business and visitor appeal and promote local economic growth and resiliency.

8.3. *The City's agricultural and fisheries sectors are supported, remain viable and continue to be an important part of the City's character, livability, and economic development vision.*

– #9 A Well-Informed Citizenry:

Continue to develop and provide programs and services that ensure the Richmond community is well-informed and engaged on City business and decision making.

9.1. *Understandable, timely, easily accessible public communication.*

9.2. *Effective engagement strategies and tools.*

Background

In 1999, after Council adopted the City's 2021 Official Community Plan (OCP), Council approved a work program to prepare an Agricultural Viability Strategy (AVS) and Profile (data base, charts, maps), to better understand and manage the City's agricultural areas including the Provincial Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) lands, for long-term soil based agricultural viability. The four-year process was carried out in partnership with the City, Richmond Farmers Institute (RFI), BC Agricultural Land Commission and BC Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, and featured extensive consultation with the local farming community.

The AVS was approved by Richmond City Council on May 26, 2003 and provided a vision, objectives, principles, policies and information, to better guide Council, the Richmond Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC), farmers, No. 5 Road Backland owners, the agricultural community, food security groups, land owner, public and staff decisions. The 2003 AVS emphasizes soil based farming and is shown in Attachment 1.

The AVS is a long-term commitment and partnership of the City and agricultural community to strengthen and enhance agricultural viability in Richmond. The Strategy identified initiatives that were to be undertaken and coordinated at the local level, to create a positive agricultural environment, infrastructure and regulatory policy framework to support the agricultural sector. At the time, the Richmond AVS was regarded by the BC agricultural community, as one of the first comprehensive and innovative municipal agricultural strategies in the Province.

Since 2003, the AVS has guided decisions regarding the establishment of the AAC, City policies to manage ALR non-farm use applications, providing significant City infrastructure (e.g., drainage) and regulatory improvements, and improved public awareness of agricultural soil-based viability and food security issues (e.g., the need for ALR tours, improved ALR road signage).

As part of the 2041 OCP preparation, the AVS was reviewed with the AAC, to determine if any changes were needed. While a number of recommendations have begun to be successfully implemented (e.g., agricultural drainage, signage, tours), looking out to 2041, many of the 2003 AVS issues and challenges still require attention (e.g., assessing the impacts of climate change and sea-level rise on agriculture, promoting soil based farming, connecting those who want to

farm with those who do farm), as they are complex, and involve ongoing federal, provincial and Metro Vancouver government, City, community, private sector and farmer support.

To continue its innovative and leadership agricultural role, Council resolved to update the 2003 AVS on June 26, 2017, to ensure that it remains effective and an important part of the City's ongoing growth and social and economic development.

Analysis

Policy Context

An updated AVS responds to several City and regional policies and objectives including:

Metro Vancouver 2040 Regional Growth Strategy

- Protect the supply of agricultural land and promote agricultural viability with an emphasis on food production

Metro Vancouver Food System Strategy

- Protect agricultural land for food production
- Enable expansion of agricultural production
- Invest in a new generation of food producers
- Increase direct marketing opportunities for local foods
- Encourage urban agriculture
- Prepare for the impacts of climate change

The City's 2041 Official Community Plan

- Champion a viable agricultural sector for both commercial and non-commercial farmers
- Protect farmland and enhance its viability
- Promote urban agriculture and advance food security

The City's 2010 Employment Land Strategy

- Continue to protect the agricultural land base
- Retain and expand agricultural activities in the ALR

The City's Richmond Resilient Economy Strategy

- Provide a supportive environment for local food production and processing

The Richmond Food Security Society's Richmond Food Charter

- Preserve and strengthen land and water resources that support food production
- Foster a culture that values and supports farmers and farm workers

- Collaborate with community groups, businesses & all levels of governments to ensure a food secure future.

Richmond's Agricultural Advisory Committee Support and Comments

The Richmond Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC) discussed the priorities of an updated AVS at its meeting on August 15, 2017. Attachment 2 includes an excerpt from the August 15, 2017 draft meeting minutes.

In summary, the AAC advises that the main issues which need to be addressed include:

- Continue drainage improvements (may require revisions to the City's Master Drainage Plan);
- Assess the impacts of any road improvements (e.g., road widening, bike lanes), on farmland;
- Assess the impacts of the increasing Fraser River 'salt wedge' on farmland and review possible improvements to supply salt-free irrigation water to affected areas;
- Assess the impacts of adjacent non-farm development on agriculture;
- Assess any impacts of industrial uses, in particular of the Port of Vancouver's past and possible future expansion on nearby ALR land;
- Raise public awareness and increase education to promote farming and farming activities;
- Consider how to streamline Provincial and City policies on agriculture;
- Provide incentives (e.g., tax rebates, providing access on unopened roads) to encourage farming on land that is not currently farmed;
- Manage soil deposit projects; and
- Continue enforcement of removing noxious invasive species.

Staff Review

A City Staff RAVS Update Team led by the Policy Planning Department (PPD) which includes staff from Parks, Engineering, Building, Community Bylaws, Transportation, Sustainability and Economic Development has identified the following topics to be addressed:

- Assessing the impacts of climate change and sea-level rise on agriculture;
- Addressing drainage improvements;
- Managing properties that are designated Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA), or are regulated by the Provincial Riparian Area Regulations (RAR) to improve the balance between farming opportunities and environmental management;
- Encouraging property owners who do not farm, to lease their land for farming purposes;
- Undertaking food tourism initiatives, to celebrate and promote agricultural heritage and assets;
- Undertaking more agricultural research, and preparing and implementing more agricultural innovations (e.g., studying the productivity potential of Richmond farmland, the increased productivity potential in direct market agriculture, facilitating land availability for the next generation of farmers);
- Encourage farming on small ALR parcels, by exploring community-focused, innovative options;
- Studying the problems and threats to farming, if currently unopened ALR roads are open up;
- Managing proposed soil deposit and removal applications and approvals;

- Managing City parkland and recreational trails, to ensure that there is minimal conflict with agricultural lands;
- Reviewing various City bylaws for their impact on agriculture, to ensure that they are consistent with the AVS and support agriculture; and
- Other, as necessary.

Statistics Canada 2016 Census Data and Information

The federal Statistics Canada 2016 Census provides recent statistical information about the agricultural industry and farmers, such as farm area, numbers of farms and farmers, farm income and dominant crops which includes the following information:

- The amount of land in the ALR has remained relatively stable in the last 20 years.
- There are approximately 265 farm operators in Richmond.
- Approximately 3,122 ha (7,714 ac) of Richmond is farmed by 189 farms.
- Approximately, 4,993 ha (12,338 ac) of Richmond's land base, or 39% of the City, is within the ALR.
- The remaining lands in the ALR are either vacant or occupied by non-farm uses (including roads, institutional uses, golf courses).
- 78 farms are owned by sole proprietor.
- Family farms and partnerships are also common (67 and 30, respectively).
- Cranberries are the most dominant crop in Richmond, with almost 807 ha (1,995 ac) in production.
- In 2016, Richmond accounted for approximately 31% of BC's cranberry acreage.
- The 189 farms that reported in 2016 Census of Agriculture recorded gross farm receipts of \$57.8 million which is an increase from \$48.6 million of gross farm receipts reported by 211 farms in 2011.

The Agriculture Hot Facts sheet, included as Attachment 3 in this report, provides further details.

Draft Terms of Reference

Staff have prepared a draft Terms of Reference (Attachment 4) for Council's consideration and approval which includes a background, specific project objectives, project scope with key topics to be explored, process and timelines, and the roles and responsibilities of staff, the AAC and if hired the consultant.

The proposed work program schedule includes the following two Phases.

- Phase 1 – RAVS Profile Update and Consultation - this includes researching and updating the Agriculture Profile, consulting with key agricultural stakeholders including the federal Ministry of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, BC Ministry of Agriculture, BC Agricultural Land Commission, Metro Vancouver, other municipalities, No. 5 Road Backland institutions, the agricultural community, food security groups, ALR land owners and urban residents and business and drafting the updated RAVS.
 - Consultation methods will include City online surveys, public open houses and meetings with external stakeholders;
 - The purpose of these consultations is to identify any further topics and solutions.

- Phase 2 - Finalizing the RAVS Update involves:
 - Staff intend to bring a report to Planning Committee containing a draft AVS and a recommended consultation program;
 - Subsequently, staff intend to bring a report to Planning Committee to consider and, if acceptable, approve the updated Richmond Agricultural Viability Strategy which will include a five year implementation program.

Staff will provide Council with periodic updates of progress and any changes to the approved Terms of Reference (e.g., by memos, verbal update at Planning Committee, reports), as necessary.

Estimated Timeline – 2 Options

Option 1: Hire a consultant to prepare the AVS Update

As Policy Planning staff are currently implementing many Council priorities and referrals (e.g., consultation on a new Market Rental Housing Policy, establishing underlying zoning for Land Use Contracts, reviewing the 702 Single Family Lot Size Policy, undertaking the Industrial Intensification Initiative, reviewing development applications [e.g., ALR non-farm use, urban rezonings, Development Permits] in a timely manner), this option would involve hiring a consultant to conduct the work which staff would manage. Staff estimate a budget of approximately \$100,000 would be required which would be funded from previously collected developer rezoning development contributions. Staff would also explore senior government and other cost sharing assistance opportunities such as the Investment Agriculture Foundation's special funding program for agricultural area planning.

The benefits of an agricultural consultant are: (1) having their expertise to provide the necessary agricultural information, analysis, options and recommendations in a timely manner, and (2) avoiding delays in addressing current Council priorities and referrals.

Staff estimate that a draft updated AVS could be presented to Council in the first quarter of 2019, if a consultant is hired to research, data analyze, consult and prepare an updated AVS.

Option 2: Staff to Prepare AVS Update

In this option, staff would conduct the research, data analysis, public and stakeholder consultation, and preparation of an updated AVS. Due to other competing priorities (e.g., consultation on a new Market Rental Housing Policy, establishing underlying zoning for Land Use Contracts, reviewing the 702 Single Family Lot Size Policy, the Industrial Intensification Initiative, reviewing development applications [e.g., ALR non-farm use, rezoning, Development Permits] in a timely manner), and an anticipated staff change at the senior level, staff anticipate not beginning the work until late 2018 with completion towards the end of 2019.

Financial Impact

None.

Option 1: Hire a consultant to prepare the AVS Update, is estimated to cost \$100,000 and would be funded from previously collected developer rezoning development contributions. Staff will also explore senior government and other cost sharing assistance opportunities.

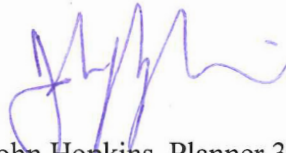
Conclusion

The 2003 AVS sets out a vision, guiding principles and recommendations for long term viability of the agricultural industry in Richmond. Looking out to 2041, the AVS requires an update to ensure that it remains effective, and responds well to the current and future issues, trends and challenges facing agricultural industry.

Staff have identified two options to undertake the RAVS Update for Council’s consideration.



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- Attachment 1: 2003 Richmond Agricultural Viability Strategy
- Attachment 2: August 15, 2017 Agricultural Advisory Committee Draft Meeting Minutes
- Attachment 3: Agriculture Hot Facts Sheet
- Attachment 4: Draft Terms of Reference for Richmond Agricultural Viability Strategy Update



Island City, by Nature

Agricultural

Viability strategy



City of Richmond & Richmond Farmers Institute

February 18, 2003



PLN - 96

Acknowledgements

- The Richmond Agricultural Viability Strategy Core Team would like to thank Richmond City Council for its support in making this work on the Richmond Agricultural Viability Strategy (AVS) possible.
- Thanks are also extended to the Investment Agriculture Foundation, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, the BC Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, and the Agricultural Land Commission for their funding and support.
- The Core Team would also like to thank the many members of Richmond City staff, and representatives of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, who took time from their busy schedules to meet with the Core Team and consultants and share their perspectives, wisdom and support.
- Thanks are also extended to the visiting specialists from the University of BC and the agricultural sector who attended the focus sessions and to the farmers who participated in various meetings and who played a large and important role in the development of the AVS. Without their help and support, the AVS would not have been possible.

The Core Team would also like to thank the consultants led by Jack Reams, P.Ag. and including Don Cameron, P.Ag., Aidan Cameron, B.Sc. and Susan Ames, P.Ag., Ph.D. The consultant team performed effectively at all times and assisted the Core Team with the development of this important AVS.

The Core Team

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The Core Team is firmly committed to the future role of agriculture in the City of Richmond and considers the AVS as an important step towards the goal of achieving a viable agricultural industry within the City's boundaries.

Recommendations in the Agricultural Viability Strategy

The Agricultural Viability Strategy (AVS) provides over 60 recommendations designed to:

- Foster and maintain agricultural viability;
- Address the key issues facing the agricultural sector in Richmond;
- Work within the framework of a 2021 vision and guiding principles for the future.

The AVS recommendations appear in the City-Wide Management Plan for Viable Agriculture (Section 3) and the Agricultural Nodal Management Plans (Section 4), and are in numerical order. A complete list of the recommendations, in the same order, can be found in Appendix II.

Acronyms and Key Words Used in the Agricultural Viability Strategy

AAC	City Agricultural Advisory Committee (see Recommendation 1)
AAFC	Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
AIA	Agricultural Impact Assessment (see Recommendation 4)
ALC	Agricultural Land Commission
ALR	Agricultural Land Reserve
ARDSA	Agricultural Regional Development Subsidiary Agreement
BCMAFF	BC Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries
City	City of Richmond
Core Team	Richmond Agricultural Viability Strategy Core Team
DFO	Federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans
EC	Environment Canada
ESA	Environmentally Sensitive Area
FPPA	Farm Practices Protection Act
MWALP	BC Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection
OCP	Richmond Official Community Plan, Schedule 1, Bylaw 7100
RFI	Richmond Farmers Institute
CAL	City Councillor Agricultural Liaison (see Recommendation 3)
SAL	City Staff Agricultural Liaison (see Recommendation 3)

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1. Executive Summary

Agriculture is important in Richmond’s history. Early settlers were attracted to Richmond because of the fertile soils and promise of productive agriculture. While Richmond has since developed into a cosmopolitan City, agriculture remains a very important part of the economy and a major land use.

However, the agricultural sector is one that is at best, misunderstood, and, at worst, frequently ignored by those not directly involved with agriculture. The industry is under pressure to meet the challenges of competing, often in an international marketplace, yet may be hampered by ongoing regulations and marketing difficulties. Often the potential impacts of urban-based decisions on the industry are not studied.

Farmers, too, may have misunderstandings about the intent of decision-makers and other public figures. Sometimes, farmers feel overwhelmed and unable to sustain the constant vigilance needed to avoid being squeezed from their land by increasing urban pressures and conflicts.

The AVS provides a 2021 vision, guiding principles, objectives, and practical strategies for the future growth and viability of the agricultural industry in Richmond.

Despite all of these pressures and concerns, the people of the City of Richmond (City), the British Columbia public, and Canadians in general have a genuine “soft spot” for farming and farmers. Often cited as a trustworthy working group, the farmer’s role in keeping food on our tables is admired and appreciated.

Consistent with this community viewpoint, “the City recognizes the importance of agriculture as a food source, an environmental resource, a heritage asset, and an important contributor to the local economy. The City is committed to protecting the supply of agricultural lands and to ensuring the viability of farm operations”.¹

It is to be noted that:

1. The development of this Agricultural Viability Strategy (AVS) is a long-term commitment and partnership of the City and agricultural community to strengthen and enhance agricultural viability in Richmond;
2. The purpose of the AVS is not to remove land from the Agricultural Land Reserve unless there is a substantial net benefit to agriculture and there is consultation with agricultural stakeholders;
3. The AVS is a community planning policy document and does not address taxation issues. While they are related, taxation issues would require separate study because they are complex.

¹ Richmond Official Community Plan Schedule 1, Bylaw 7100 (OCP) p. 16.

2021 Agricultural Viability Strategy Vision

The 2021 vision is:

“The City and the farm...working together for viable agriculture”.

2021 Agricultural Viability Strategy Principles

The following are the guiding principles developed for the AVS:

1. The dominant use of the land in the ALR in Richmond will be for a competitive, diverse and flexible agricultural industry.
2. The stability and integrity of the ALR boundary will be supported and maintained.
3. Agricultural economic growth, innovation, diversification and best practices are the best ways to protect agricultural land in Richmond and to ensure the ongoing viability of agricultural operations.
4. Urban development in the ALR will be minimized.
5. Subdivision in the ALR will be minimized, except where it supports agricultural viability (e.g. diversification, expansion, etc.).
6. Richmond farmers will be provided with the necessary support, services and infrastructure that are required for agricultural viability.
7. Residents of the City of Richmond will be encouraged to learn more about agriculture in their city and to support locally grown agricultural products.
8. Effective and positive communication with the general public and the agricultural sector will be a priority.
9. Decision-making will be coordinated in a consultative manner and will consider all potential impacts on agricultural viability.
10. A sustainable environment will be maintained to provide quality air, water and land which supports and complements farming.

With the development of the 2021 vision and guiding principles for the future of agriculture in Richmond (Section 2.2), over 60 recommendations emerged from this planning process.

“The City and the farm...working together for viable agriculture”.

City-Wide Management Plan

The AVS contains an overall City-Wide Management Plan for Viable Agriculture, with the following strategies identified:

- The **Agricultural Decision Making Strategy** (Section 3.1) provides recommendations for ensuring that decisions made on a city-wide basis promote agricultural viability, consider the impacts on agriculture, and are made in a consultative manner;

- The **Services and Infrastructure Strategy** (Section 3.2) provides recommendations to meet the needs of the agricultural sector with respect to water, drainage, sewerage and transportation management;
- The **City Policies and Bylaws Strategy** (Section 3.3) provides recommendations to ensure that City policies and bylaws support the agricultural sector and the viability of the industry, without imposing unnecessary restrictions;
- The **Non-Farm Uses and Parks and Recreation Strategy** (Section 3.4) provides mechanisms to ensure that the dominant use of the ALR in Richmond is viable and sustainable agriculture;
- The **Agricultural Edge Strategy** (Section 3.5) contains recommendations for planning along rural-urban edges to minimize, and address, potential conflicts between farm and non-farm neighbours;
- The **Strategy for Agriculture with respect to the Environment and Environmentally Sensitive Areas** (Section 3.6) encourages environmental management on, and adjacent to, agricultural land that does not impact negatively on normal farm practices;
- The **Public Education and Awareness Strategy** (Section 3.7) provides opportunities for the general public to better understand the agricultural industry in their community;
- The **Economic Growth and Diversification Strategy** (Section 3.8) supports economic growth and diversification in the agricultural industry to allow it to remain competitive and responsive to changing times.

Nodal Management Plans

In addition to the City-Wide Management Plan, eight separate Agricultural Nodal Management Plans were developed (Section 4). The eight nodes were identified to manage the resources and issues within specific areas and complement the city-wide strategies.

Implementation Strategy

The AVS also includes an Implementation Strategy (See Section 5) to provide direction for the implementation of the many recommendations. Further details for those recommendations that may be implemented in the shorter term are provided in Section 5.2.

One of the most significant recommendations that is considered as a high priority is the creation of a City Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC) (See Recommendation 1) and the establishment of City Councillor and Staff Agricultural Liaisons (CAL, SAL), (See Recommendation 3) to work closely with the agricultural community.

City Divisions will be encouraged to implement the strategy and to support the agricultural sector as further development occurs in Richmond.

Another key recommendation is the introduction of an Agricultural Impact Assessment process (AIA) (See Recommendation 4) to assess the potential impact of development on the agricultural sector. This process is recommended to ensure that future development, and other initiatives, would not have negative impacts on the capacity to farm in Richmond. In addition, appropriate “agricultural edge” planning is recommended to reduce the impact of activities carried out by both the agricultural and non-agricultural sectors in the City on each other.

There is a sense of optimism that this AVS can make an important contribution to the City and to the farm and non-farm communities living and working together in the area.

Implementation of the AVS is viewed as a critical step in securing a viable agricultural community for the future and increasing the level of economic activity in the agricultural sector. The responsibility to follow through with any and all necessary measures is enormous. Without a comprehensive strategy to guide agricultural planning, the alternative is continued erosion of the agricultural resource base and opportunities for the farming community.

2. Introduction

Agriculture is an important part of the economy and a major land use in the City. With 38% (4,916 hectares or 12,147 acres) of the total land base within the ALR, a moderate climate, and favorable topography and soils, the agricultural sector is a significant engine of the overall City economy. In



1995, Richmond farms earned over \$56 million in revenues². Richmond’s farmers grow and raise a variety of crops, livestock, specialty and niche products, ranging from cranberries and potatoes to beef and dairy cattle, to sheep, flowers and honey.³

Despite the favorable climatic and soil conditions for agriculture, there are many challenges for the industry. Drainage and irrigation issues, rural-urban conflicts, competing non-farm uses within the ALR, high land values, and other issues, put pressure on the industry.

The industry pressures notwithstanding, both rural and urban residents of Richmond have considerable optimism and hopefulness for the future viability of farming in Richmond’s ALR. They value the green space provided by a working agricultural industry. They want young people to understand the role that agriculture plays in their community - to be able to see, first hand, how farms work, and where much of their food originates. They want to be able to consume locally grown

produce.⁴ In short, the community understands that farmers are stewards of the land and their presence is a benefit to everyone.

Removal of Land from the ALR

The intent of the AVS is to increase agricultural viability, not to remove lands from the ALR unless there is a significant net benefit to agriculture and there is consultation with agricultural stakeholders.

Taxation

The AVS is primarily a community planning strategy (i.e. land use, servicing, environmental, economic development and public awareness), not a taxation strategy. As taxation is complex, taxation issues would need to be addressed in a separate study.

² City of Richmond Agricultural Profile, January 2002 (Profile), p. 57.

³ Profile, p. ii.

⁴ RAVS Agricultural Survey Report, “Vision Statements”, pp. 53-57.

2.1 Definitions

The following definitions are relevant to the AVS:

1. Land Use - “Agriculture” (City of Richmond)

The Richmond Zoning Bylaw defines “Agriculture” as “the use of land for the growing of crops or the raising of livestock.”

Properties that are zoned “Agricultural District (AG1)” are permitted to have the following uses:

- Agriculture
- Keeping & Raising of Animals for Commercial Purposes
- Horticulture
- Peat Extraction & Processing
- Horse Riding Academy
- Roadside Stand (Classes A & B), provided that the operation is clearly ancillary to a permitted agricultural use
- Animal Hospital or Clinic
- Residential, limited to One-Family Dwelling
- Boarding and Lodging, limited to two persons per dwelling unit
- Home Occupation
- Radio & Television Transmission Facilities
- Public Sewage Collection, Treatment and Disposal Facilities
- Accessory Uses, Buildings and Structures, but excluding secondary suites.

Some of the above uses require approval from the Agricultural Land Commission under the *Agricultural Land Commission Act*.

Subject to requirements, farmhouses (as an accessory use on a farm) and non-farm houses are allowed in the AG1-Zone.

2. “Farm Operation” (Farm Practices Protection Act)

In the Provincial *Farm Practices Protection Act*,

“**Farm operation**” means any of the following activities involved in carrying on a farm business:

- a) Growing, producing, raising or keeping animals or plants, including mushrooms, or the primary products of those plants or animals;
- b) Clearing, draining, irrigating or cultivating land;
- c) Using farm machinery, equipment, devices, materials and structures;
- d) Applying fertilizers, manure, pesticides and biological control agents, including by ground and aerial spraying;
- e) Conducting any other agricultural activity on, in or over agricultural land;

and includes

- f) Intensively cultivating in plantations, any
 - (i) Specialty wood crops, or
 - (ii) Specialty fibre crops
 prescribed by the minister;
- g) Conducting turf production
 - (i) Outside of an agricultural land reserve, or
 - (ii) In an agricultural land reserve with the approval under the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* of the Provincial Agricultural Land Commission;
- h) Aquaculture as defined in the *Fisheries Act* if carried on by a person licensed, under Part 3 of that Act, to carry on the business of aquaculture;
- i) Raising or keeping game, within the meaning of the *Game Farm Act*, by a person licensed to do so under that Act;
- j) Raising or keeping fur bearing animals, within the meaning of the *Fur Farm Act*, by a person licensed to do so under that Act;
- k) Processing or direct marketing by a farmer of one or both of
 - (i) The products of a farm owned or operated by the farmer, and
 - (ii) Within limits prescribed by the minister, products not of that farm,
 to the extent that the processing or marketing of those products is conducted on the farmer's farm;

but does not include

- l) An activity, other than grazing or hay cutting, if the activity constitutes a forest practice as defined in the *Forest Practices Code of British Columbia Act*;
- m) Breeding pets or operating a kennel;
- n) Growing, producing, raising or keeping exotic animals, except types of exotic animals prescribed by the minister.

Note: “Minister” means the Provincial Minister responsible for the *Farm Practices Protection Act*.

3. Taxation - “Agriculture”

The B.C. Assessment Authority considers as “farm” class all or part of a parcel of land used for:

- primary agricultural production
- a farmer’s dwelling, or
- the training and boarding of horses when operated in conjunction with horse rearing.

In order to maintain the “farm” class, the farm must meet the following income criteria:

- if land is smaller than 8,000 m² (2 acres), must earn \$10,000 from the sale of primary agricultural products.
- if land is between 8,000 m² (2 acres) and 4 ha (10 acres), \$2,500 must be earned.
- if land is larger than 4 ha (10 acres), \$2,500 plus 5% of the actual value of any farm land in excess of 4 ha (10 acres) must be earned from farming activity on the land.

2.2 Overview of the Planning Process

The development of the AVS is only one phase of a 5-phase project to ensure the viable use of Richmond’s farmland:

Phase 1 involved Council approval to prepare the AVS, finalize the funding, and prepare background documents (Agricultural Profile and Survey Report);

Phase 2 involved a series of Farmers’ Workshops and a Public Open House for public input on issues and opportunities for agriculture in Richmond. There was ongoing research, including partnerships with federal and provincial agencies;

Phase 3 involved hiring the consultant team and developing the AVS;

Phase 4 involves the presentation of the AVS to Council for approval, and setting the stage for implementation;

Phase 5 involves the full implementation of the AVS.

2.3 The Planning Area

The planning area for the AVS is the ALR land within the City of Richmond. (See Figure 1)

2.4 Description and Features of the Planning Area

This section is intended to provide a snapshot of the physical setting and agricultural activity of the planning area. The facts and figures presented are derived from the City’s Agricultural Profile, which should be consulted for more detailed information.

2.4.1 Agriculture in the Planning Area

Richmond has a rich agricultural tradition and history, dating back to pre-European settlement when First Nations people used the cranberry bogs of Lulu Island as a food source.⁵ Farmers in Richmond have made use of the fertile soils and favorable climate to produce a wide variety of crops and livestock, including:

- Berries, such as cranberries, blueberries, raspberries and strawberries;
- Field vegetables, such as potatoes, pumpkins, squash and corn;
- Nursery products;
- Greenhouse production;
- Hens and chickens;
- Beef and dairy cattle;
- Sheep, lambs, llamas and alpacas;
- Equestrian uses and facilities;
- Bees and honey;

⁵ Profile, front cover.

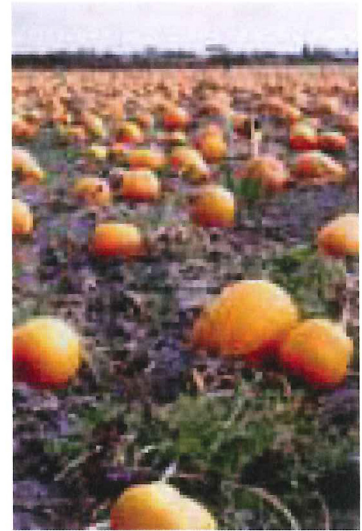
- Tree fruits;
- Organic vegetables and herbs.

2.4.2 Challenges

The main limitations facing the agricultural industry include:

- Biophysical limitations such as excessive wetness of some soils. However, with modest improvements, all of the farmland in Richmond is considered prime;⁶
- Pressure to urbanize;
- Pressure to subdivide;
- Rural-urban conflicts;
- Conflicting land uses and high land values;
- Economic issues;
- Service and infrastructure problems.

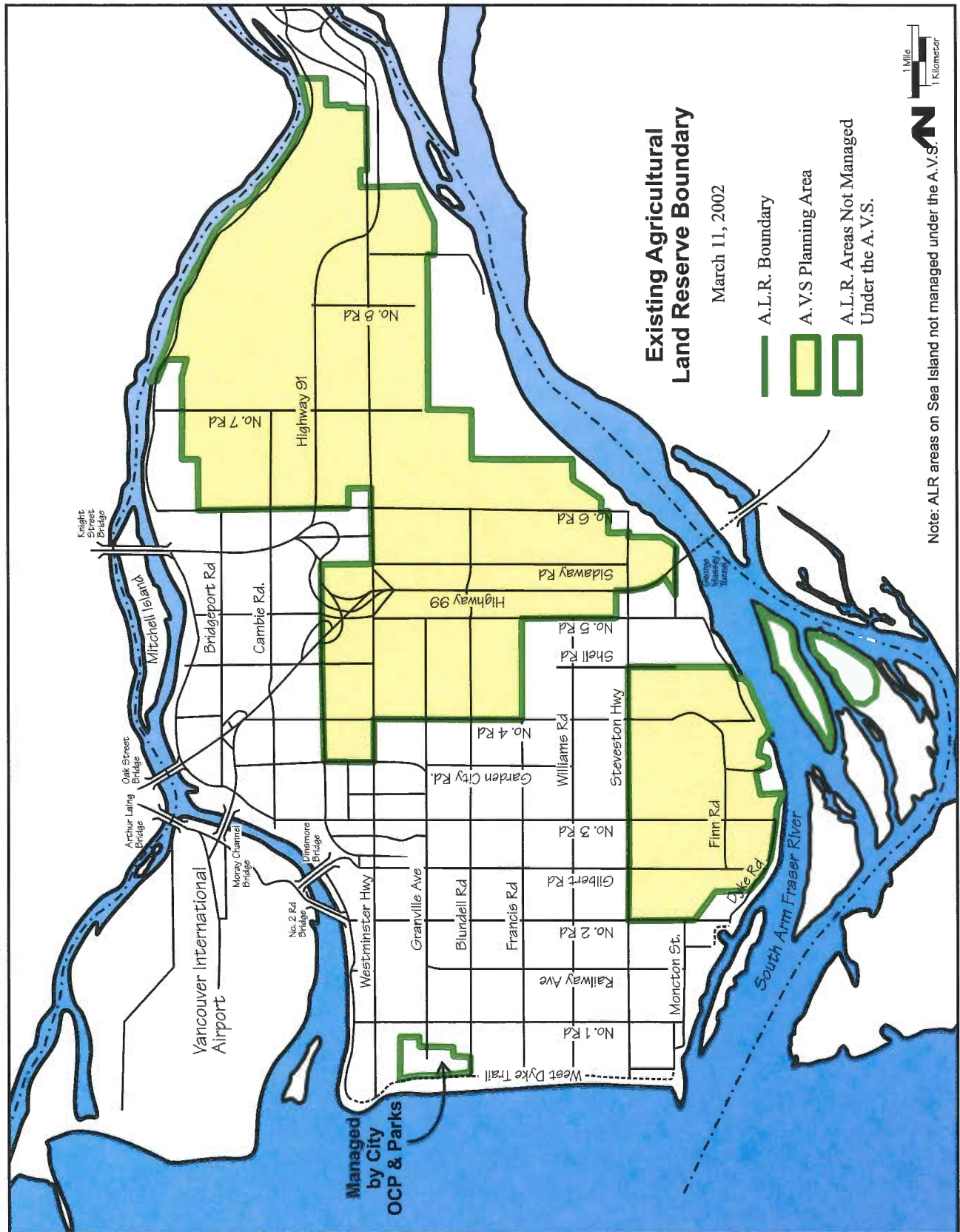
Despite the above limitations, Richmond farms generate over \$56 million in revenues⁷ and contribute significantly to the local and provincial economy.



⁶ Profile, p. 14.

⁷ Profile, p. 57.

Figure 1 – The Planning Area



2.5 Purpose of the Agricultural Viability Strategy

The purpose of this AVS is 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.

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.

The AVS recommendations presented in this document provide a framework towards achieving agricultural viability in Richmond. Each recommendation will be considered in terms of its feasibility and practicality for achieving positive benefits for agriculture. It is acknowledged that other agricultural viability directions not identified in the Strategy may be brought forward and considered for implementation.

The implementation of strategies in the AVS over the long term aims to achieve:

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

2.6 2021 Vision and Guiding Principles for the Future

City Corporate Vision

The City’s corporate vision statement is “to be the most appealing, livable, and well-managed community in Canada”⁸. To ensure that this corporate vision is met with respect to agriculture, the City seeks to ensure the viability of farm operations and to protect the supply of agricultural lands.

The City also recognizes the importance of agriculture as a food source, an environmental resource, a heritage asset, and an important contributor to the local economy.⁹

With the City’s corporate vision statement and objectives for agriculture in mind, the Core Team developed the following 2021 vision and guiding principles for agricultural viability in Richmond.

⁸ OCP, p. 3.

⁹ OCP, p. 16.

2021 Vision

“The City and the farm...working together for viable agriculture.”

The vision is the foundation for the AVS. It functions as both the starting point and “measuring stick” for all management plans and recommendations.

2021 Guiding Principles

1. The dominant use of the land in the ALR in Richmond will be for a competitive, diverse and flexible agricultural industry.
2. The stability and integrity of the ALR boundary will be supported and maintained.
3. Agricultural economic growth, innovation, diversification and best practices are the best ways to protect agricultural land in Richmond and to ensure the ongoing viability of agricultural operations.
4. Urban development in the ALR will be minimized.
5. Subdivision in the ALR will be minimized, except where it supports agricultural viability (e.g. diversification, expansion, etc.).
6. Richmond farmers will be provided with the necessary support, services and infrastructure that are required for agricultural viability.
7. Residents of the City of Richmond will be encouraged to learn more about agriculture in their city and to support locally grown agricultural products.
8. Effective and positive communication with the general public and the agricultural sector will be a priority.
9. Decision-making will be coordinated in a consultative manner and will consider all potential impacts on agricultural viability.
10. A sustainable environment will be maintained to provide quality air, water, and land which supports and complements farming.

3. City-Wide Management Plan for Viable Agriculture

The City-Wide Management Plan for Viable Agriculture identifies options and opportunities for enhancing the viability of agriculture.

The management plan contains the following strategies:

- The **Agricultural Decision Making Strategy** (Section 3.1) provides recommendations for ensuring that decisions made on a city-wide basis promote agricultural viability, consider the impacts on agriculture, and are made in a consultative manner;
- The **Services and Infrastructure Strategy** (Section 3.2) provides recommendations to meet the needs of the agricultural sector with respect to water, drainage, sewerage and transportation management;
- The **City Policies and Bylaws Strategy** (Section 3.3) provides recommendations to ensure that City policies and bylaws support the agricultural sector and the viability of the industry, without imposing unnecessary restrictions;
- The **Non-Farm Uses and Parks and Recreation Strategy** (Section 3.4) provides mechanisms to ensure that the dominant use of the ALR in Richmond is viable and sustainable agriculture;
- The **Agricultural Edge Strategy** (Section 3.5) contains recommendations for planning along rural-urban edges to minimize, and address, potential conflicts between farm and non-farm neighbours;
- The **Strategy for Agriculture With Respect to the Environment and Environmentally Sensitive Areas** (Section 3.6) encourages environmental management on, and adjacent to, agricultural land that does not impact negatively on normal farm practices;
- The **Public Education and Awareness Strategy** (Section 3.7) provides opportunities for the general public to better understand the agricultural industry in their community;
- The **Economic Growth and Diversification Strategy** (Section 3.8) supports economic growth and diversification in the agricultural industry to allow it to remain competitive and responsive to changing times.

3.1 Agricultural Decision-Making Strategy

3.1.1 Introduction

Because the general population is mostly removed from direct experience with agriculture and the farm population is declining relative to the growing urban sector, agricultural interests are often inadequately represented in the City’s decision-making processes.

A major goal of the AVS is to provide a framework to ensure that future decision-making recognizes agricultural interests.

It is also critical that farmers be provided with a practical mechanism to promptly access information about the City bylaws, operations, and services that may be necessary to make farm management decisions.

3.1.2 Objectives

To develop and support initiatives which:

- Establish a direct link between Council and the agricultural sector;
- Ensure that decision-making takes place in consultation with the agricultural sector;
- Provide opportunities for improved communication between the agricultural and non-agricultural sectors on agricultural issues;
- Ensure that decisions about agriculture are made using the most current information available;
- Ensure that the impacts on agriculture of all decisions are adequately understood and taken into consideration.

3.1.3 Recommendations

1. Establish a City Agricultural Advisory Committee of Council (AAC).

- a) Have the AAC play the key advisory role in implementing the AVS;
- b) Require all City departments to seek input from the AAC when major departmental initiatives are proposed as part of their planning strategy, where agriculture is affected;
- c) Committee Membership:
 - i) Voting Members:

The Committee shall consist of nine (9) voting members appointed by Council, including:

- Five (5) “farming representatives” chosen from nominations by the Richmond Farmers Institute. A “farming representative” is defined as a farmer who derives a majority of his/her income from farming;
- Two (2) farming representatives from the general agricultural community (nursery, livestock, equestrian, greenhouses, crops, etc.);
- One (1) representative from the Advisory Committee on the Environment; and
- One (1) representative from the community at large.

ii) Committee Advisors (Non-voting Members):

The Committee shall also consist of the following advisors including:

- A City Councillor Agricultural Liaison (CAL);
 - A representative from BCMAFF;
 - A representative from the ALC;
 - A staff member from the Engineering/Public Works Department(s);
 - A staff member from the Urban Development Division (Staff Agricultural Liaison);
 - A staff member from the RCMP; and
 - Others as necessary.
2. Maintain the existing ALR boundary and ALR land base in Richmond, and do not support a change to the ALR boundary or a loss of ALR land unless:
 - there is a substantial net benefit to agriculture; and
 - the agricultural stakeholders are fully consulted.
 3. Designate various City Staff as Agricultural Liaisons (SALs), with the Policy Planning Department Liaison as the lead SAL to ensure coordination.
 - a) Have the CAL/SALs play a key support role in the implementation of the AVS and supporting the AAC;
 - b) Publicize the SALs as people to assist the agricultural sector to access information about City bylaws, operations, and services, address agricultural issues and concerns, and contribute to various agricultural projects;
 - c) Develop a flow chart to facilitate access to information required by the agricultural sector. This flow chart may include information about policies and bylaws, processes involved for planning and development approvals, growth and diversification information, etc.
 4. Introduce an Agricultural Impact Assessment process (AIA).
 - a) Use the AIA for all proposed projects involving land use changes or development:
 - i) Within the ALR;
 - ii) Adjacent to the ALR;
 - iii) Outside the ALR for projects which may have an impact on agriculture, such as transportation corridors, recreational trails, new residential developments, and others.
 - b) Develop criteria, (e.g. drainage/irrigation implications, air quality, noise, transportation and traffic, and others), for the AIA in conjunction with BCMAFF, the ALC, the proposed AAC (see Recommendation 1), and others as appropriate.
 5. Maintain an Agricultural Data System.
 - a) Update and expand the scope of the Agricultural Profile, the Agricultural Land Use Inventory, and the Geographic Information System every three years or sooner to maintain current information about the agricultural sector;

- b) Continue to engage in innovative research partnerships with groups such as Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC), BC Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries (BCMAFF), Greater Vancouver Regional District (GVRD), University of British Columbia (UBC), Simon Fraser University (SFU) and others to determine agricultural trends in Richmond;
- c) Monitor changes in the agricultural sector to determine issues of concern and changes in overall viability, using the following possible indicators:
 - i) Indicators which track land use and land availability:
 - Hectares (or acres) of ALR land in Richmond;
 - Hectares (or acres) of ALR land which is Farm Class;
 - Hectares (or acres) of ALR land available for sale or lease.
 - ii) Indicators which track farm viability and the overall health of the agricultural sector:
 - Annual number of applications, approvals and rejections for exclusion of land from the ALR;
 - Annual number of applications, approvals and rejections for non-farm use and subdivision in the ALR;
 - Net Returns from Agriculture;
 - Economic Diversity Index.
- d) Integrate the data into ongoing City operations and decision making wherever possible.

3.2 Services and Infrastructure Strategy

3.2.1 Introduction

The service and infrastructure issues related to improving agriculture include those connected to drainage, irrigation, flood risks, and transportation.

3.2.2 Objectives

To develop and support initiatives which:

- Provide farmers with the necessary support, services and infrastructure required for agricultural viability;
- Ensure that drainage improvements are made for the ALR, in order of priority, based on discussion with the AAC;
- Ensure that servicing and infrastructure projects do not interfere with normal farm practices;
- Ensure that servicing and infrastructure projects are delivered according to specified performance standards, based on discussion with the AAC;
- Ensure that farm vehicles can adequately move between agricultural areas.
- Ensure that drainage, servicing and infrastructure changes are considered in a holistic and comprehensive manner so that the quality of air, land and water is maintained for agricultural viability.

3.2.3 Drainage and Irrigation

Richmond soils do not drain easily and much of the Island is prone to periodic flooding. Adequate drainage is essential to agricultural viability. The City has begun to develop a master drainage plan as a component of the City’s Capital Program, and now has a four-year schedule in place to model the water, sewer, drainage and road infrastructure. Agricultural drainage and irrigation systems will be given priority in the modeling schedule.

Once the master drainage plan is in place, solutions can be developed for improving the drainage of agricultural areas that were not covered by the Federal Government’s Agricultural Regional Development Subsidiary Agreement (ARDSA) funding program.

Current ditch cleaning also occurs on a four-year cycle. City staff have demonstrated a willingness to address both drainage and ditch-cleaning issues that may arise independently from the regular four-year cycle.

Despite the need for adequate drainage, in the summer months many farms require irrigation. The City serves the irrigation needs of the agricultural sector through much of the same infrastructure it uses for general drainage.

A storm drainage map is shown in Figure 2.

3.2.4 Flood Risks

The primary agent of flooding is the annual swelling of the Fraser River in the spring. Flooding may also be caused by seasonal high tides¹⁰. Richmond is currently surrounded by an unbroken dyke system, much of which is City-maintained. The dykes have been built to a standard designed to handle a tide level expected to be equaled or exceeded once in 200 years, on average. This level of protection may not be sufficient.

During the development of this AVS, considerable discussion was held on the subject of a proposed mid-Island dyke along No. 8 Road. The mid-Island dyke was identified as an option to reduce the potential risk of flooding to the western portion of the City¹¹. The building of the mid-Island dyke would have the following significant impacts on eastern agricultural land and existing agricultural operations:

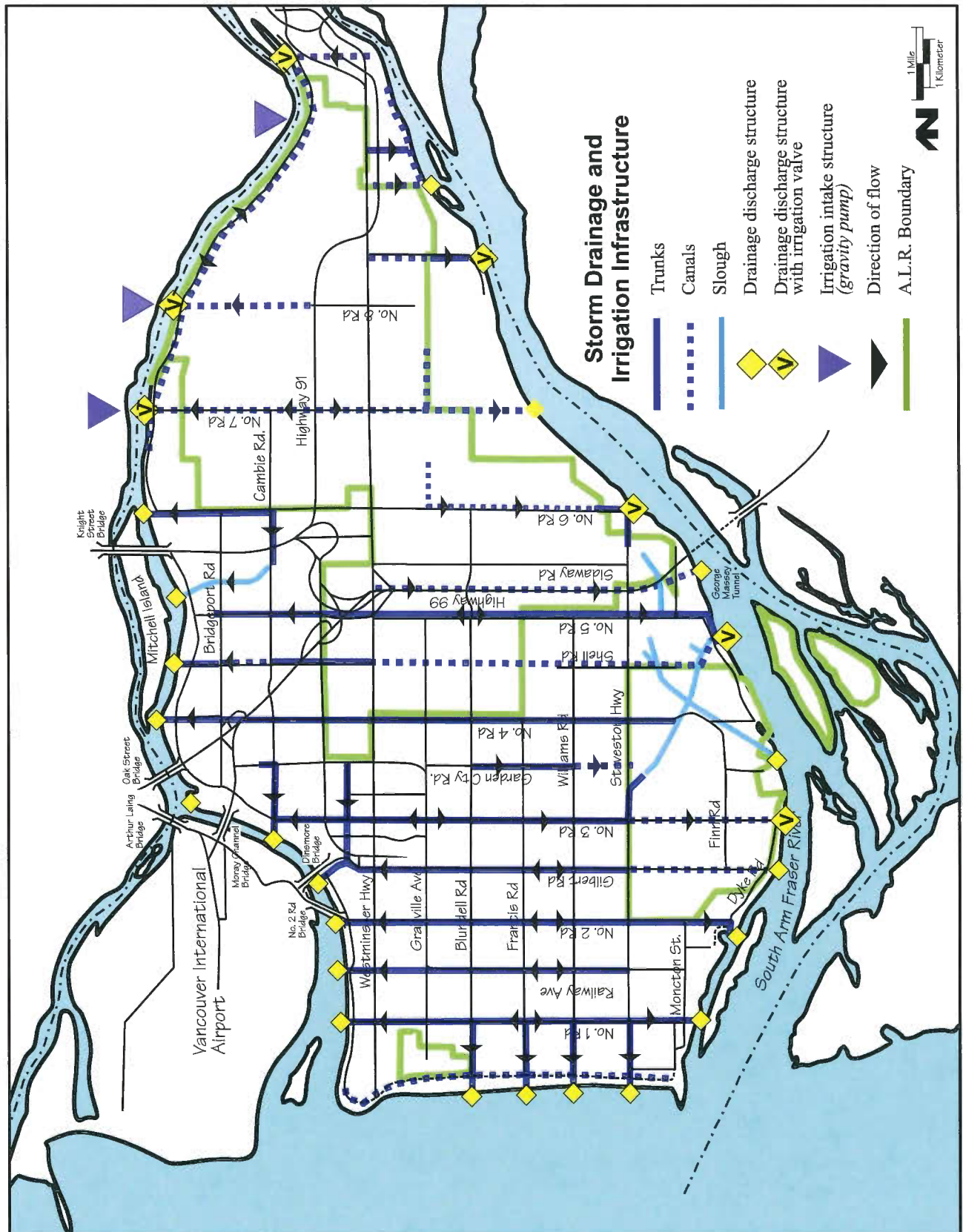
- The dyke would remove land from agricultural production;
- The dyke will bring increased traffic which would interfere with farm traffic and provide further opportunities for vandalism, trespassing, and theft;
- The dyke would make it difficult for farmers to move between parcels where farmers farm on both sides of No. 8 Road;
- The dyke would interfere with the present drainage/pumping system and may cause the adjacent land to rise because of compaction resulting from dyke construction;
- The dyke would have to be built on organic soils requiring extensive amounts of fill and resulting in a wider dyke than if built on mineral soil.

There are alternate ways to address this flood risk, such as improving dyking around the eastern tip of Richmond.

¹⁰ Profile, p. 10.

¹¹ Technical Report Floodplain Management Study, Hay and Company Consultants Inc., November 1989.

Figure 2 - Storm Drainage Map



3.2.5 Transportation

Other servicing and infrastructure issues relate to transportation corridors. Farmers who must move farm equipment and other vehicles between and among different agricultural areas in the City must use City roads. This use may result in increased travel time for farmers because non-farm vehicles also use the roads a great deal. Road use by non-farm vehicles, joined with farm vehicle use, causes frustration for both the agricultural and non-agricultural communities.

3.2.6 Recommendations

6. Encourage regular communication among the agricultural sector and the City, provincial and federal servicing and infrastructure departments by formalizing the City Staff-Farmer Drainage Committee and by establishing terms of reference and involving the agricultural sector, Engineering and Public Works Division, and others as appropriate (e.g. Policy Planning, Environmental Programs, Transportation, etc.).
7. Support the City’s Master Drainage Plan.
 - a) Identify and ensure that drainage improvements to the ALR occur in order of priority and according to ARDSA performance standards;
 - b) Ensure that drainage improvements are considered in a comprehensive manner in consultation with the agricultural community and relevant City departments;
 - c) Encourage sufficient notification to the agricultural sector of ditch-cleaning plans in order to achieve beneficial, effective and timely agricultural drainage;
 - d) Encourage the agricultural sector to cooperate with ditch-cleaning practices by providing appropriate right-of-ways;
 - e) Encourage the agricultural sector to support ditch-sidecasting activity where it does not interfere with normal farm practices and/or agricultural capability of the soils;
 - f) Require the proposed AIA (see Recommendation 4) be completed for all servicing and infrastructure projects.
8. Request the Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection to investigate the viability of rebuilding and upgrading the perimeter dyke around the eastern tip of Richmond along the North Arm of the Fraser River, instead of the proposed mid-Island dyke.
9. Review and designate “farm travel” routes for travel between agricultural areas:
 - a) Use recognizable signage to endorse these routes for farm vehicles;
 - b) Review the wording of “Respect Slow Moving Farm Vehicles” signs and consider “Yield To Farm Vehicles”;
 - c) Develop new road design guidelines to ensure that the outermost lane and shoulder in combination have a minimum of 4.3 meters (14 feet) in lateral clearance to accommodate the width of farm vehicles;
 - d) Review options to minimize the impact of farm traffic on non-farm traffic by providing safe turn-offs for farm vehicles on identified agricultural corridors carrying high volumes of traffic.

10. Review Official Community Plan Transportation Policy 4(d)¹² which states “Restrict the development of new major roads in the ALR to avoid jeopardizing farm viability, except for service roads intended to serve adjacent industrial land” to:
- a) Consider removal of the phrase “except for service roads intended to serve adjacent industrial land” to limit future major road development on ALR land that does not serve the viability of agriculture;
 - b) Ensure that a “least impact” policy exists to protect farmers from the impacts of possible transportation corridors through the ALR by:
 - i) Requiring the proposed AIA (see Recommendation 4) be completed for new road projects and that appropriate steps be taken to mitigate potential conflicts;
 - ii) Ensuring that whenever potential negative impacts for agriculture may occur, that adequate compensation and/or viable alternatives are available and fully explored;
 - iii) Placing emphasis on positive benefits of transportation initiatives for farm operations (e.g. improved drainage and access).

¹² OCP, p. 61.

3.3 City Policies and Bylaws Strategy

3.3.1 Introduction

Critical to the development of the AVS is the need to ensure that City policies and bylaws conform to the 2021 AVS vision, guiding principles and objectives. This will be an ongoing challenge for the City because there are often conflicting land use issues that arise. This issue is further made difficult because few people are involved directly with the agricultural sector when compared to the city population as a whole.

Although policies and bylaws can support agricultural viability, the emphasis on communication and dialogue to resolve issues and conflicts is essential for ongoing harmony between the agricultural and non-agricultural sectors.

There are numerous examples where bylaws no longer apply, or applicable bylaws are in place but enforcement is difficult or impractical.

3.3.2 Objectives

To develop and support initiatives which:

- Minimize non-farm use in the ALR;
- Minimize subdivision in the ALR;
- Emphasize communication, dialogue and co-operation over legislation and the enforcement of bylaws;
- Monitor City policies and bylaws to ensure that they support agricultural viability;
- Monitor City policies and bylaws to ensure that they conform to the Farm Practices Protection Act (FPPA);
- Emphasize a cooperative and partnership approach in avoiding and addressing nuisance complaints (e.g. spraying, burning, noise, etc.);
- Provide farmers with information about policies and bylaws related to agriculture.

3.3.3 Recommendations

11. Ensure that all proposed City policies and bylaws relating to the agricultural sector and ALR encourage agricultural viability:
 - a) Refer proposed policies and bylaws to the proposed AAC (see Recommendation 1) for comment prior to their adoption;
 - b) Ensure that policies and bylaws, prior to adoption, are subject to the Agricultural Impact Assessment (see Recommendation 4) where appropriate.
12. Ensure that new City bylaws related to agriculture and the ALR are developed with regard to existing bylaws to determine whether changes in enforcement would solve the identified problems.

13. Review Zoning Bylaw 5300 in consultation with the public and prepare information, options and recommendations to improve its effectiveness in supporting agricultural viability. This review includes the following items and other actions not yet identified:
 - a) Review the current list of uses permitted in the AG1 zone and update it to reflect changes in Provincial legislation and the objectives of achieving agricultural viability;
 - b) Review the AG1 zoning regulations for residential uses on farms and for non-farm residences in the ALR to determine how to better achieve agricultural viability;
 - c) Review the non-agricultural uses currently permitted in the AG1 zone to better achieve agricultural viability;
 - d) Review how to better manage building materials, storage and other accessory farm uses;
 - e) Review the current policy on the storage of farm equipment/vehicles related to the farm operation as a principal use (the storage of farm equipment/vehicles is currently an accessory use);
 - f) Review all minimum and maximum property and building setbacks for residences in the ALR to minimize conflicts with adjacent uses.
14. Review the roadside stand regulations in Business Regulation Bylaw 7148 and prepare information, options, and recommendations to improve their effectiveness and achieve agricultural viability.
15. Review existing bylaws, regulations, guidelines and associated operational procedures to ensure that they conform to the FPPA, the Guide for Bylaw Development In Farming Areas and the Local Government Act.
16. Develop an information package for farmers about City agricultural policies and bylaws, and make this package available to the RFI and place it on the City website.
17. Encourage a cooperative and partnership approach to avoid and address nuisance complaints (e.g. spraying, noise, odour, dust, pesticide application, burning, etc.)

3.4 Non-Farm Uses and Parks and Recreation Strategy

3.4.1 Introduction

Despite land being within the ALR, farming may not occur on it. However, farming is the priority use for ALR land and all non-farm uses must be carefully reviewed and considered for their impacts on agriculture and their ability to contribute net benefits to enhance agriculture. It is important that the entire community understand that the agricultural area is a “working farm” landscape.

In Richmond, nearly 40% of the land in the ALR is not used for farming purposes.¹³

Some of the current non-farm uses of ALR land in Richmond include:

- Roads that bring traffic and encourage residential developments;
- Non-farm residential dwellings that remove land from agricultural production and can result in more rural-urban conflicts;
- Filling organic soils for non-agricultural purposes. Fill material is excavated off-site during construction projects. Due to its many origins, fill is variable in terms of its particle size distribution and rock content. Fill material reduces the agricultural potential of land because it has a much lower capability for crop production than the native organic soils. Filled land requires rehabilitation before it can be used for agricultural production. Fill also raises the water table of the surrounding lands, which negatively impacts agricultural production;
- Golf courses and driving ranges. Although golf courses and driving ranges are no longer an acceptable use for ALR land, there are nine such uses currently in place in Richmond’s ALR;
- Parks and recreational trails. The ALR is an especially attractive area for recreational uses due to the expansive green space and unique habitat;
- Recreational equestrian activities. Because no designated trails currently exist, equestrian activities take place on farm roads and in fields, and interfere with normal farm practices;
- Churches and schools in the “Community Institutional District” that have resulted in less land available for agricultural production (see Section 4.3 - McLennan 1).

Some non-farm uses of the ALR may support agriculture, such as farm access roads, farmhouses, and buildings that are accessory uses to farm uses. Also, the regional transportation infrastructure allows farmers to get their agricultural products to market, and provides efficient access for consumers who may purchase farm products directly from the farm gate.

Many of the uses noted above also require an application to the ALC for non-farm use approval.

3.4.2 Objectives

To develop and support initiatives which:

- Ensure that farming is the primary use of ALR land;
- Ensure all existing and any proposed non-farm uses of ALR land support agricultural viability and do not interfere with normal farm practices;
- Direct proposed non-farm uses of ALR land to non-ALR land wherever possible;
- Ensure that any non-farm uses of ALR land occur in designated and/or minimal impact areas and with minimal negative impacts on farming;

¹³ Profile, p. 33.

- Minimize subdivision;
- Ensure that City policies related to parks, transportation, and others support overall agricultural viability.

3.4.3 Recommendations

18. It is recommended that the proposed AAC (see Recommendation 1) review the following non-farm uses of ALR land and prepare information, options and recommendations. This review includes examining the following items and other actions not yet identified:
 - a) Review the feasibility of amalgamating smaller lots to larger ones wherever possible;
 - b) Restrict the upgrading of existing roads and development of new roads unless there is a direct or net benefit to farming;
 - c) Discourage the use of fill on organic soils, except for the following agricultural purposes:
 - i) When required to ensure a solid foundation for a farm residence or other structure related to the agricultural operation;
 - ii) To provide a road base for access which benefits agriculture.
 - d) Limit recreational uses of ALR land to:
 - i) Encourage dyke and recreational trails at the perimeter of the ALR;
 - ii) Work with the agricultural community, equestrian community and recreational community to ensure that recreational uses adjacent to or within the ALR are compatible with farm uses and have a positive benefit to farming.
 - e) Ensure that a “least disruption to farmers” policy exists to protect farmers from the impacts of recreational uses by:
 - i) Requiring the proposed AIA (see Recommendation 4) be completed for new recreational uses and that appropriate steps be taken to mitigate potential conflicts;
 - ii) Ensuring that whenever potential negative impacts for agriculture may occur, that adequate compensation and/or viable alternatives are available;
 - iii) Increasing the awareness among equestrian owners about riding on or near private property and public roads and trails, and the impact which horses and riders can have on agricultural land;
 - iv) Preparing over the long term and in partnership with others, agricultural edge plans for recreational uses, dykes and perimeter trails in and adjacent to the ALR;
 - v) Ensuring that suitable facilities (e.g. toilets and garbage cans) are provided to eliminate trespassing and littering on existing recreational trails;
 - vi) Ensuring that no financial costs are incurred by farmers due to recreational trails or activities;
 - vii) Investigating the feasibility of developing an insurance policy and a ‘save harmless’ policy which would protect farmers from liability and property damage as a result of non-agricultural activities.

3.5 Agricultural Edge Strategy

3.5.1 Introduction

The rural-urban edge is often identified as an area of conflict that may create an overall negative impact on farming.

An agricultural edge plan, tailored to individual rural-urban edges, can be an important tool for mitigating potential and existing conflicts and for maintaining the stability of the agricultural edge. It is important that the agricultural edge plan be tailored to specific situations, and take into consideration the type of conflict or potential conflict, the type of agriculture, the topography and existing land uses.

It must also be noted that although the agricultural edge has the potential for many conflicts, a positive side effect for agriculture may be better access to urban markets¹⁴. Pilot projects involving less intensive agricultural activities (e.g. small lot agriculture, U-pick operations, farm direct marketing, agri-tourism, organic and ecological farming, and allotment gardens) may identify useful applications along an agricultural edge.

Not all rural-urban edges have the same problems.

- *Common complaints from urban residents relate to noises, smells, spraying, and the frustrations caused by slow-moving farm vehicles;*
- *Common complaints from farmers relate to vandalism, theft, damaged equipment, trespassing, and water run-off from adjacent urban development.*

3.5.2 Buffers

A common tool for agricultural edge planning is the buffer. Buffering is currently required by the City for new developments adjacent to the ALR. A buffer is defined as an area of land separating adjacent land uses and managed for the purpose of mitigating specific impacts of one use (e.g. noise, theft, spraying, trespassing, dust) on another use. The land separating the adjacent land uses may be left empty, or in many cases may include buffer elements such as:

- Fences;
- Vegetative or landscaped buffers (trees, hedging, etc.).

While buffers can work well in areas where a new development is being considered, a buffer may not always be a practical solution. Often the only land available for a buffer is on the agricultural side. Historically, limited consideration has been given to where a buffer should be located or who should fund it. Farmers, subjected to negative reactions to their farm practices from urban residents, have often taken the initiative to install buffers.

¹⁴ “Agriculture and Innovation in the Urban Fringe: The Case of Organic Farming in Quebec, Canada”, *Journal of Economic and Social Geography*, volume 90, number 3, 1999, pp. 320-328.

3.5.3 Objectives

To develop and support initiatives which:

- Recognize the rural-urban edge as a special management area, requiring special farm management and urban development practices and specific agricultural edge plans with specific design requirements;
- Mitigate and/or prevent conflicts between rural and urban land uses;
- Reinforce the integrity and stability of the ALR boundary;
- Ensure that land is not removed from agricultural production in order to accommodate a buffer or any other potential element of an agricultural edge plan;
- Recognize that it is preferable to have compatible land uses (e.g. industrial) adjacent to agricultural land rather than incompatible uses (e.g. residential, schools, etc.);
- Provide residents and developers who live along an agricultural edge with information about agricultural activity in their area;
- Ensure consultation with landowners on both sides of the agricultural edge to avoid and mitigate urban-rural conflicts.

3.5.4 Recommendations

19. Recognize the following areas for agricultural edge planning (see Figure 3):

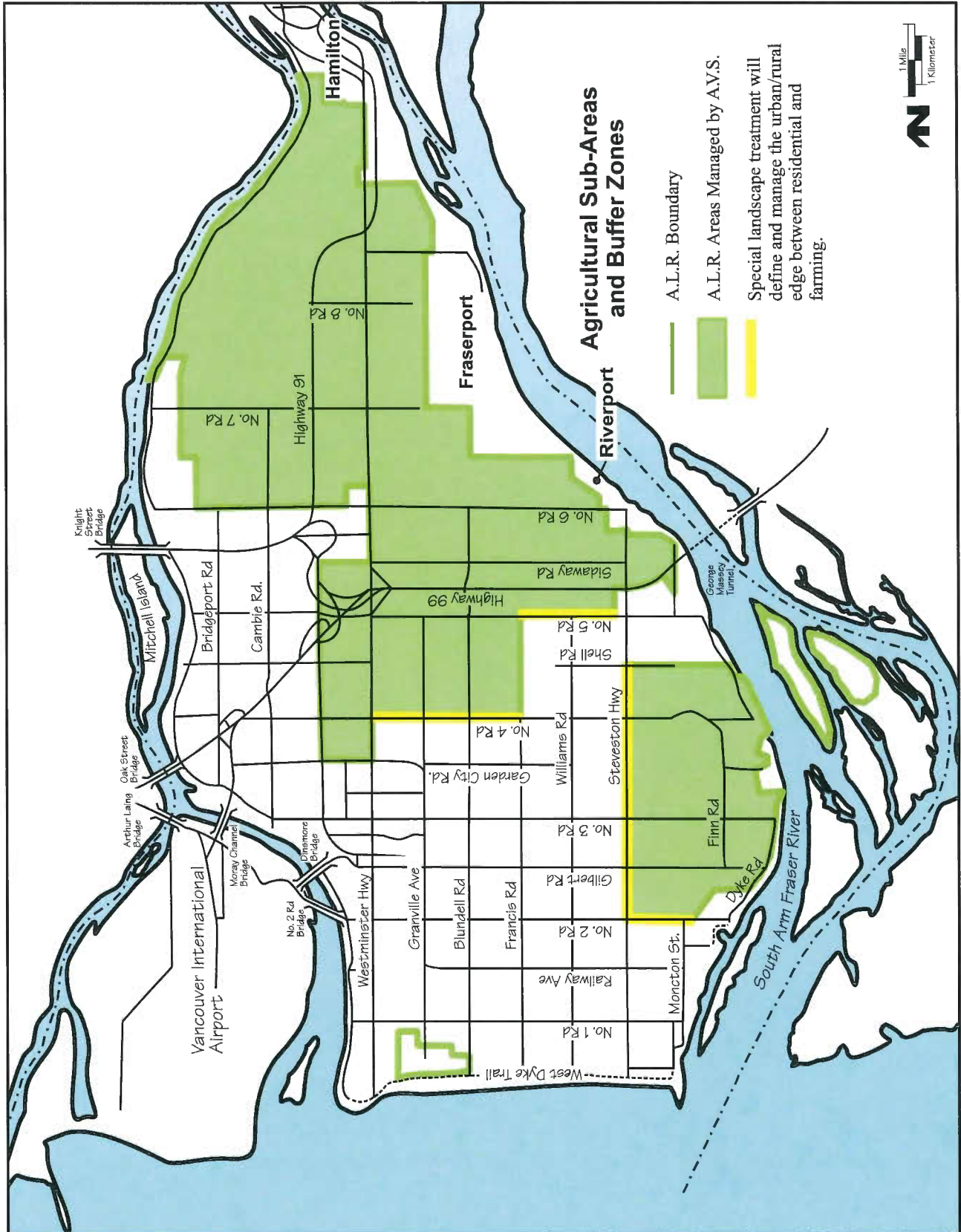
- a) The west and north edges of Gilmore;
- b) The west edge of McLennan 2;
- c) Behind the outer ring of houses in McLennan 2;
- d) Shell Road Trail;
- e) Behind the assembly uses on No. 5 Road;
- f) North edge of Fraserport Industrial Lands.

20. Develop comprehensive agricultural edge plans for areas, including:

- a) An inventory of existing and potential uses and conflicts;
- b) A site-specific management plan with appropriate design guidelines;
- c) A proposed AIA (see Recommendation 4);
- d) Consultation with the ALC, BCMAFF, the proposed AAC (see Recommendation 1), and review of relevant resources such as the ALC report “Landscaped Buffer Specifications”;
- e) Consultation with landowners on both sides of the agricultural edge;
- f) An appropriate time-frame for implementation;
- g) Mediation to mitigate any conflicts while an agricultural edge plan is being developed, or where buffering is not in place.

21. For new development adjacent to the ALR:
 - a) Require the preparation of an agricultural edge plan, including buffering on the urban side, at the expense of the developer; and
 - b) Require the registration of restrictive covenants, where possible. The intent of the covenant would be to:
 - i) Inform prospective buyers of residential properties of the occurrence of normal farm practices on adjacent farmland (e.g. spraying, noise, odours, dust, pesticide application, burning, etc.); and
 - ii) Minimize urban-rural conflicts.
22. Direct compatible land uses (e.g. industrial) to land adjacent to the ALR in lieu of incompatible uses (e.g. residential, schools), wherever possible to avoid conflicts.
23. Provide the materials developed for the Public Education and Awareness Strategy (Recommendation 30 a) to residents along an agricultural edge to inform them about agriculture in their area.

Figure 3 - Buffer Map



3.6 A Strategy for Agriculture With Respect to the Environment and Environmentally Sensitive Areas

3.6.1 Introduction

Agriculture and adjacent urban development require a quality environment (e.g. good water and soils, etc.). The measures necessary to sustain land, water and air will depend on the crop, livestock commodity, the location of an operation and current and future production practices. A healthy sustainable environmental resource base will support healthy agricultural production and a healthy economy.

Sensitive areas in the ALR (e.g. certain natural areas, certain watercourses), however, present both challenges and opportunities to farmers.

3.6.2 Environmental Guidelines and Requirements for Agriculture

To protect valuable land, water and air resources, the agricultural industry in cooperation with government agencies have launched several initiatives over the last decade including: commodity specific environmental guidelines, the adoption of best agricultural management practices, the development of integrated pest management procedures, and the Partnership Committee on Agriculture and the Environment (i.e. a Federal-Provincial initiative which supports agricultural/environmental enhancements).

Several federal and provincial laws are in place to protect land, water and air from pollution, including pollution from agricultural sources. For instance, The Code of Agricultural Practice for Waste Management under the Waste Management Act describes generally accepted practices for waste management on farms. The purpose of the Environmental Guidelines for agricultural producers in British Columbia is to further specify the requirements of the Code and other pieces of legislation and to provide suggestions for environmentally sound agricultural waste management practices.

Documents have been prepared in cooperation with agricultural producer organizations and government agencies, and are available for specific commodities (e.g. dairy, beef, poultry, horses, berries, field vegetable, greenhouse, nursery). Environmental issues addressed in these guidelines include: housing and waste handling systems, manure storage and application, nutrient management, preservation of soil and water resources and pesticide application.

3.6.3 Environmentally Sensitive Areas

In 1991, the City amended its OCP to define and map Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs). The ESA designation applies to all river shorelines, sloughs, marshes, wetlands, bogs, and major treed areas. Many of the ESAs in Richmond lie within or adjacent to the ALR (see Figure 4).

The City is reviewing its ESA policies and farmers wish to contribute to this process. The review is being undertaken to clarify the inventory of ESAs and their functions.

The current city policy on ESAs does not directly limit agricultural cultivation; farmers may clear areas of ESA for farming purposes. However, the City requires a Development Permit for the subdivision of a lot that contains ESA designation or for structures that encroach into an ESA. This may limit the location of new agricultural buildings, such as barns, on a property. The City’s approach to issues involving farms and ESAs is to work on a case by case basis to mitigate the potential impacts to the extent possible without undue hardship to farmers.

3.6.4 Other Regulations

From time to time, a senior level of government may introduce legislative changes that impact the way in which farmlands are managed. As new initiatives are brought forward, the City and farming community are willing to participate in a consultative process to provide input into new legislation or initiatives, in a way that addresses the unique characteristics and conditions of Richmond.

3.6.5 Issues

The presence of ESAs in and adjacent to the ALR has both advantages and disadvantages for farmers.

On the one hand, ESAs offer the following benefits:

- if located along an urban-rural boundary, ESAs function as natural buffers between agricultural and non-agricultural uses to reduce conflicts.
- along watercourses, the vegetation of ESAs help to filter pollution from all sources.
- may support insects that help to pollinate crops.

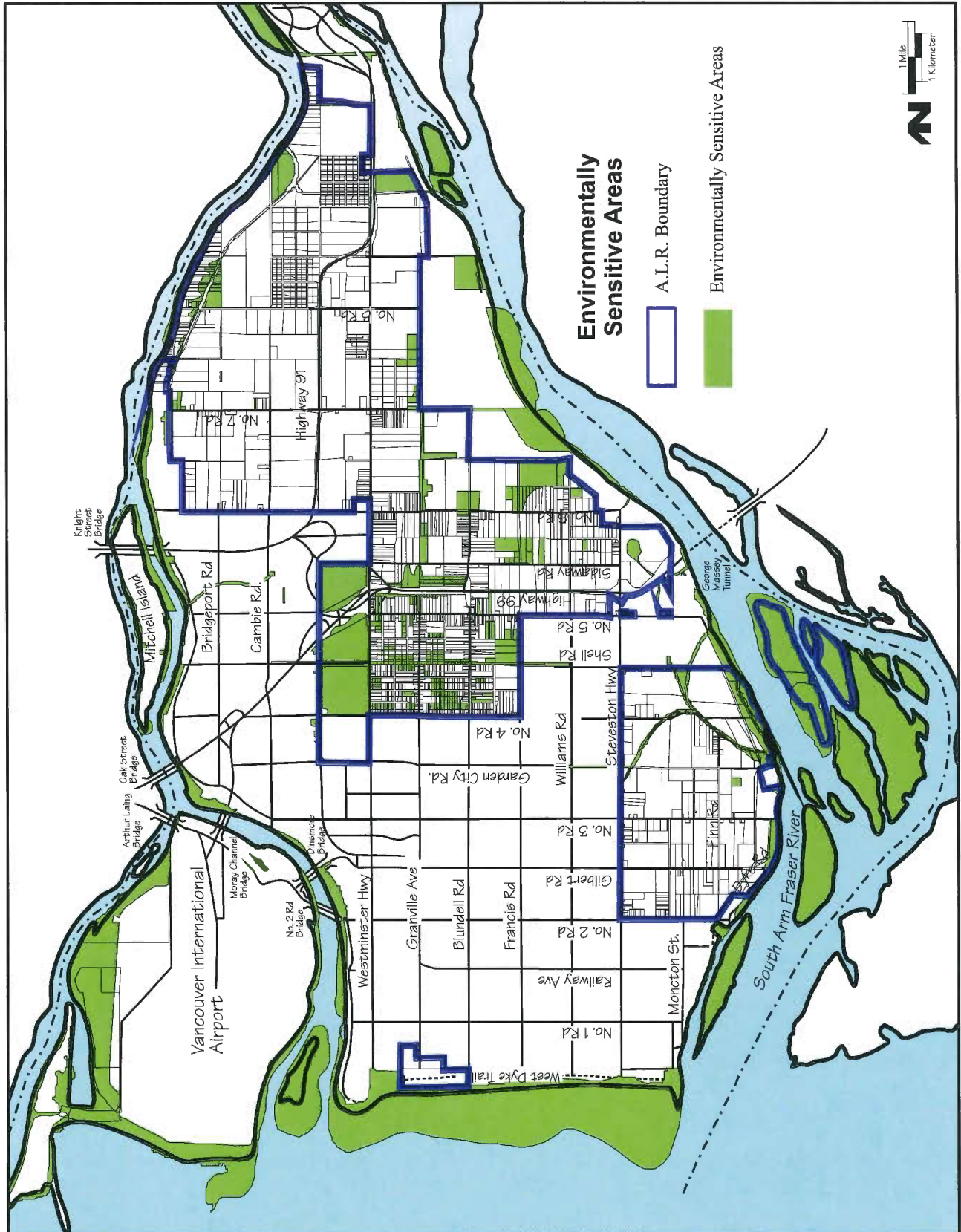
However, farmers are concerned that the existence of ESAs adjacent to or within the Agricultural Land Reserve and the related government policies may have an impact on the economic viability of farm operations. The presence of ESAs in and adjacent to agricultural lands raises several land use, servicing and environmental issues for farmers:

- policies regarding drainage and irrigation maintenance in or adjacent to ESAs may create difficulties (e.g. timing, extra costs, conditions, permit refusals, etc.) for farmers to achieve the level of drainage required to efficiently produce crops.
- restrictions or conditions for ESAs imposed on farmers (e.g. land clearing, ditch maintenance) could interfere with normal farm activities.
- ESAs may be a source of weeds, which can potentially contaminate adjacent farm fields.
- ESAs with considerable tree cover provide habitat for bird species. While some species of birds can assist in natural pest control, other species (e.g. starlings, migratory waterfowl) can damage agricultural crops and perennial forage fields.
- ESAs may support insects that are harmful to crops.

The above concerns, when combined with other economic challenges facing agriculture, may hinder efforts to expand and diversify agricultural operations.

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Figure 4 – Environmentally Sensitive Areas Map



3.6.6 Objectives

To develop and support initiatives which:

- Allow ESAs and normal farm activities to co-exist to achieve agricultural viability and environmental sustainability.
- Improve communications among the farming community, local and senior governments to:
 - Provide farmers with information about legislation and initiatives that may impact farming practices;
 - Keep all levels of government informed of the farmers’ interests, concerns and suggestions.
- Encourage farmers to adopt best management practices to maintain high air, land and water quality.
- Encourage consultation with farmers and consideration of individual circumstances.
- Develop mitigative strategies which address the impact of wildlife on agriculture.

3.6.7 Recommendations

24. The Agricultural Advisory Committee, farming community, City staff and other stakeholders shall work together to study, analyze, form options and strategies to address the following issues of concern around ESAs and the environment, as well as other issues that may arise that are of interest to the farming community:
 - land use
 - drainage, irrigation and ditch maintenance
 - land clearing
 - weed control
 - crop loss due to wildlife and birds
25. Ensure that the management strategies from 24) above allow for “least impact” on agricultural viability and whenever agricultural viability may be impacted, ensure that adequate compensation and/or viable alternatives are available.
26. Review City management policies and bylaws to:
 - a) assess the implications for farming
 - b) work towards consistency and compatibility (where not in conflict with other legislation) with the provisions of the Farm Practices Protection Act and the Guide to Bylaw Development in Farming Areas.
27. Consult with the Agricultural Advisory Committee and the farm community (together with the Advisory Committee on the Environment and other stakeholders) in the review of existing ESAs in the ALR to:
 - a) Refine and clarify the inventory and functions of the existing ESAs.
 - b) Assess the interaction between agriculture and ESAs.
28. Provide information to all farmers related to best management practices and encourage them to adopt beneficial environmental guidelines.
29. Review the work of the Partnership Committee on Agriculture and the Environment and incorporate relevant aspects of their work into farm operations and City policies.

3.7 Public Education and Awareness Strategy

3.7.1 Introduction

While the urban population has grown significantly to its current level of 166,000, the farm population has been steadily declining. Currently in Richmond, there are slightly more than 200 farmers. Nevertheless, this small percentage of people are working on a large proportion of Richmond’s land base (38% of land is within the ALR) and generating over \$56 million in revenues each year¹⁵.

The results of the increase in urban population relative to the farming population are:

- Less awareness among the general population for farming, and its importance as an economic resource, a heritage asset and its relevance to the local community;
- Less understanding of normal farm practices;
- People becoming disconnected from the agricultural process that produces much of their food;
- The “political voice” of farmers declining dramatically. Farmers’ issues may not be given the same weight as urban issues.¹⁶

Many people in Richmond, other areas of the Lower Mainland, and British Columbia in general, believe there is a strong need to raise the awareness of agriculture’s role within the non-agricultural sector. A public that understands the role of agriculture, and is aware of the needs of the industry, will be in a better position to appreciate and support the many contributions of the agricultural sector.

3.7.2 Objectives

To develop and support initiatives which:

- Encourage residents to learn more about agriculture in Richmond and to support locally-grown agricultural products;
- Provide opportunities for communication and consultation between the farm and non-farm communities;
- Ensure that residents who live within, or adjacent to, the ALR are aware of normal farm practices and the FPPA;
- Encourage farmers to continue practicing positive public relations.

¹⁵ Profile, p. 57.

¹⁶ Planning for Agriculture, p. 9-3.

3.7.3 Recommendations

30. Institute an information program to increase public awareness and commitment for agriculture, in consultation with the agricultural community, the Agriculture Awareness Coordinator (BC Agriculture Council), Agriculture in the Classroom Foundation, and others:
- a) Develop appropriate materials to share with all residents (e.g. publications, via the City website) to provide them with information about agricultural activity in their area, including:
 - i) The type of farming in the area;
 - ii) Examples of normal farm practices they may experience;
 - iii) A copy of the BCMAFF publication “The Countryside and You”;
 - iv) A list of appropriate people to direct questions and concerns, such as the proposed SAL (see Recommendation 3), ALC, BCMAFF, AAFC, and others;
 - v) A “Country User Code” to identify appropriate behaviour in agricultural areas.
 - b) Develop an agricultural signage program.
 - i) Place signs along roads used by farm vehicles, along recreational trails, and incorporate signs into agricultural edge planning;
 - ii) Ensure that signage focuses on “positive wording” as opposed to “directives”, such as the following examples:
 - In areas where farm vehicles may be traveling, “*Richmond farmers with slow moving vehicles use these roads too – support your local farm community*”;
 - Where vandalism and trespassing issues occur, “*This crop was planted by a member of your local farm community – please respect the farmer’s livelihood*”;
 - iii) Ensure that all signs are visibly similar, and incorporate the recommended “logo” or visual symbol (Recommendation 37 a).
 - c) Encourage the ALC to develop signs to indicate the location and extent of the ALR. An example may be “*You are now in the Agricultural Land Reserve. Please respect farmland.*”
 - d) Develop a brochure that celebrates the City’s agricultural tradition and history.¹⁷
 - i) In plans and programs, emphasize the relationship between the City’s corporate vision statement (see Section 2.5) and how agriculture helps achieve that vision;
 - ii) Prepare an agricultural calendar that shows key agricultural events in the area, harvest times, etc.
 - e) Encourage linkages and partnerships between the agricultural community and the media to facilitate public education and awareness;
 - f) Create an agricultural business profile to provide information on agriculture as a business opportunity;

¹⁷ PFA, p. 9-6.

- g) Develop an information package for farmers about agricultural policies and bylaws, heritage policies that support the preservation of buildings, lands and methods, and make this package available to the RFI and the public and place it on the City website (see Recommendation 16);
 - h) Explore the opportunities for holding a special event (e.g. Harvest Festival) or regular seasonal activity (e.g. summer weekend Farmer’s Market) to promote local produce and celebrate the City’s agricultural tradition and history.
31. Create opportunities for Council, City staff and others to tour the agricultural lands and learn about the role agriculture plays in the City. The proposed AAC (see Recommendation 1) may facilitate this activity.
 32. It is recommended that the proposed AAC (see Recommendation 1) review the option of introducing a Restrictive Covenant for properties within, and adjacent to, the ALR to address issues of conflict (e.g. noise, odours) related to agricultural uses. Example: Covenant used by City of Surrey for subdivisions bordering the ALR.
 33. Encourage existing farmers to continuously maintain their farm operations to prevent unsightly premises and project a positive public image for agriculture in Richmond.

3.8 Economic Growth and Diversification Strategy

3.8.1 Introduction

Without the ability to make an adequate return on their investment and labour, there will be no incentive for farmers to continue farming in Richmond. Efforts to increase profitability through growth and diversification will support the ongoing efforts of farmers to maintain viable operations.

The following factors influence economic growth of the agricultural industry:

- Inadequate infrastructure for drainage, transportation, etc. (see Section 3.2);
- Over-regulation and conflicting regulations. (See Section 3.3);
- Non-farm uses adjacent to agricultural operations (see Section 3.4);
- Non-farm uses in the ALR;
- Subdivision. Small parcels are less efficient to farm and can limit agricultural options;
- Cost of land. High land costs force farmers into leases;
- Speculation about the future of ALR land. Landowners who speculate for non-farm developments are more likely to lease land to farmers on a short-term basis. Leases that are less than three years in length inhibit a farmer’s ability to make long-term agricultural management decisions;
- Absentee landlords. Productive land is kept out of agricultural use when landowners are not available to lease the land to farmers.

3.8.2 Diversification

One way for farmers to increase viability is to diversify their farm operations. Trends in agricultural diversification relate to:

- Expanding types of farming, such as farm markets;
- Innovative products for niche markets, such as herbs and goat milk;
- Certified organic and specialty products;
- Provision of an agricultural experience through agri-tourism.

Some specific examples for diversification are the following:

- Farm direct marketing;
- Farmers’ markets;
- Agricultural niche and specialty services, especially those that provide convenient options for purchasing local products (e.g. home or office delivery);
- Community-supported agriculture, by having customers purchase food before it is grown;
- Value-added on-farm processing;
- Growing products for the diverse ethnic community;
- Niche and specialty products such as herbs, goat milk, or organically grown products;
- Consistent labeling of local products to link products with the area where they are grown;
- Linkages with support agencies and businesses, such as encouraging restaurants to utilize cuisine based on local products;
- Agri-tourism such as school tours, farm bed and breakfast locations;
- Crop diversification.

One option for finding new and innovative growth and diversification opportunities is the use of **pilot projects**. Pilot projects can demonstrate value, yet are small, easy to evaluate, and low in risk. Pilot projects, in cooperation with other partners such as the City, BCMAFF, and AAFC, may be effective ways for farmers to diversify their farm operations or try larger-scale initiatives.

3.8.3 Objectives

To develop and support initiatives which:

- Encourage farmers to achieve long-term economic success through growth and diversification;
- Provide opportunities for the Richmond agricultural industry to become a place of agricultural innovation and excellence often using pilot projects;
- Assist farmers to lower production costs where possible (e.g. improve drainage);
- Keep farmers up-to-date and informed about new agricultural opportunities and options for growth and diversification;
- Increase the demand for locally-grown agricultural products;
- Encourage agricultural support services and industry to locate in Richmond;
- Maximize the agricultural land available for agricultural production.

3.8.4 Recommendations

34. Develop a strategy to encourage agricultural support services and social infrastructure (such as agricultural research, agricultural banking and financing, industrial technologies, agricultural marketing, specialized suppliers of agricultural materials and equipment) to locate in Richmond, in cooperation with the agricultural sector, Business Liaison and Development, BCMAFF, and others as appropriate.
35. Maximize the agricultural land available for agricultural uses:
 - a) Review the feasibility of amalgamating smaller lots to larger ones wherever possible. These parcels could then be sold as farmland or leased to farmers;
 - b) Request the Province to review the policies on non-resident land ownership in BC and in other jurisdictions to determine how land owned by non-residents may be more fully farmed;
 - c) Establish guidelines for parcel sizes suitable for farming, including options for smaller parcels of 2 acres or less;
 - d) Encourage longer-term lease opportunities for farmers:
 - i) Discourage non-farm uses of the ALR land (see Recommendation 18);
 - ii) Develop a City-based Agricultural Land Registry to assist farmers to find agricultural land available for leasing.
 - e) Explore the rezoning of selected non-ALR land (currently zoned for light industrial use) to “Light Industrial/Agricultural” to provide for the inclusion of greenhouses as a use and to encourage greenhouse development on non-ALR land wherever possible;
 - f) Encourage non-ALR “multiple-use” industrial buildings that will attract partnerships such as allowing greenhouse development on the tops of some industrial buildings as a possible pilot project.

- g) Review the costs and benefits of selling or leasing the City-owned nursery to local farmers in order to minimize City competition with the agricultural sector.
36. Encourage farmers to diversify their agricultural operations, by:
- a) Liaising with support agencies such as BCMAFF, AAFC, GVRD and the ALC to gather information and identify resources to clarify diversification opportunities (e.g. new crop production and development, value-added production, etc.);
 - b) Encouraging partnerships between farmers and
 - i) Other farmers that haven't been historically involved with the RFI and the proposed AAC;
 - ii) Local businesses and industry, such as the hospitality sector, Chamber of Commerce, and others;
 - iii) City Departments and City agencies, such as Business Liaison and Development, Tourism Richmond, Chamber of Commerce, and others;
 - iv) Provincial and Federal ministries and agencies for projects which may make growth and diversification opportunities more easily attainable;
 - v) Others to carefully locate and manage allotment gardens (community gardens) on agricultural lands.
37. Develop a "Buy Local" marketing initiative to increase demand for locally grown agricultural products, in cooperation with Business Liaison and Development, Tourism Richmond, Chamber of Commerce, the RFI, and others.
- a) Develop a "Taste of Richmond" logo or symbol, to appear on all agricultural communications and signs, and which could also be used by growers to label their products;
 - b) Institute a weekly Farmers' Market in cooperating school yards or other City facilities to increase consumer access to locally grown agricultural products;
 - c) Support local growers by purchasing locally-grown landscape materials and food products for City use wherever possible;
 - d) Identify options to support access to farm direct markets along Steveston Highway where current traffic patterns discourage stopping at farms selling local products;
 - e) Develop a list of local agricultural products and when and where they are available, and circulate the list to local restaurants, ferries, schools and businesses to encourage linkages with Richmond agricultural producers;
38. Undertake a market study project to assist farmers to understand their local Richmond market, with respect to:
- a) Products desired by restaurants, and ethnic, specialty and niche products;
 - b) Expected quality and service features;
 - c) Expected product availability requirements.

39. Encourage new farmers to enter the agricultural sector by:
- a) Creating an agricultural business profile to provide information on agriculture as a business opportunity (see Recommendation 29 f);
 - b) Encouraging retiring farmers to apprentice new ones;
 - c) Investigating and publishing options for new farmers to obtain management skills training from local educational institutions and private trainers;
 - d) Assisting local young people to find job opportunities in agriculture wherever possible, including co-operative education opportunities with area educational institutions such as Kwantlen University College, University of British Columbia, and area secondary schools.

City Owned Nursery

The City owns its own nursery in order to supply City properties with plants, trees and other vegetation. There is some concern among the agricultural sector that the City’s involvement in its own nursery is not the best way to support farming. It has been suggested that the City review other alternative approaches such as selling or leasing the nursery to local farmers.

40. Review the costs and benefits of selling or leasing the City-owned nursery to local farmers in order to minimize City competition with the agricultural sector.

4. Agricultural Nodal Management Plans

4.1 Introduction and Overview

Agricultural Nodal Management Plans serve to manage the resources and issues within specific areas of the ALR effectively, and in support of viable agriculture.

The Nodal Management Plans are designed to complement the City-Wide Management Plan for Viable Agriculture (see Section 3), by identifying key nodal issues and providing recommendations for the management of those issues. In many cases, reference is made to an earlier recommendation.

Nodal management plans are a way for the City to recognize that not all parts of Richmond’s ALR are the same. Different areas require different plans to ensure the long-term goal of maintaining and enhancing the viability of agriculture.

More detailed Agricultural Nodal Management Plans for each node may need to be developed in the future, particularly for McLennan 2 and 3, to further address issues and concerns as they arise.

The nodes have been defined by:

- Soil type;
- Drainage;
- Existing land uses;
- Existing boundaries, such as Highways 91 and 99;
- Parcelization;
- Number of absentee landlords;
- Land-ownership patterns;
- Extent of rural-urban conflicts.

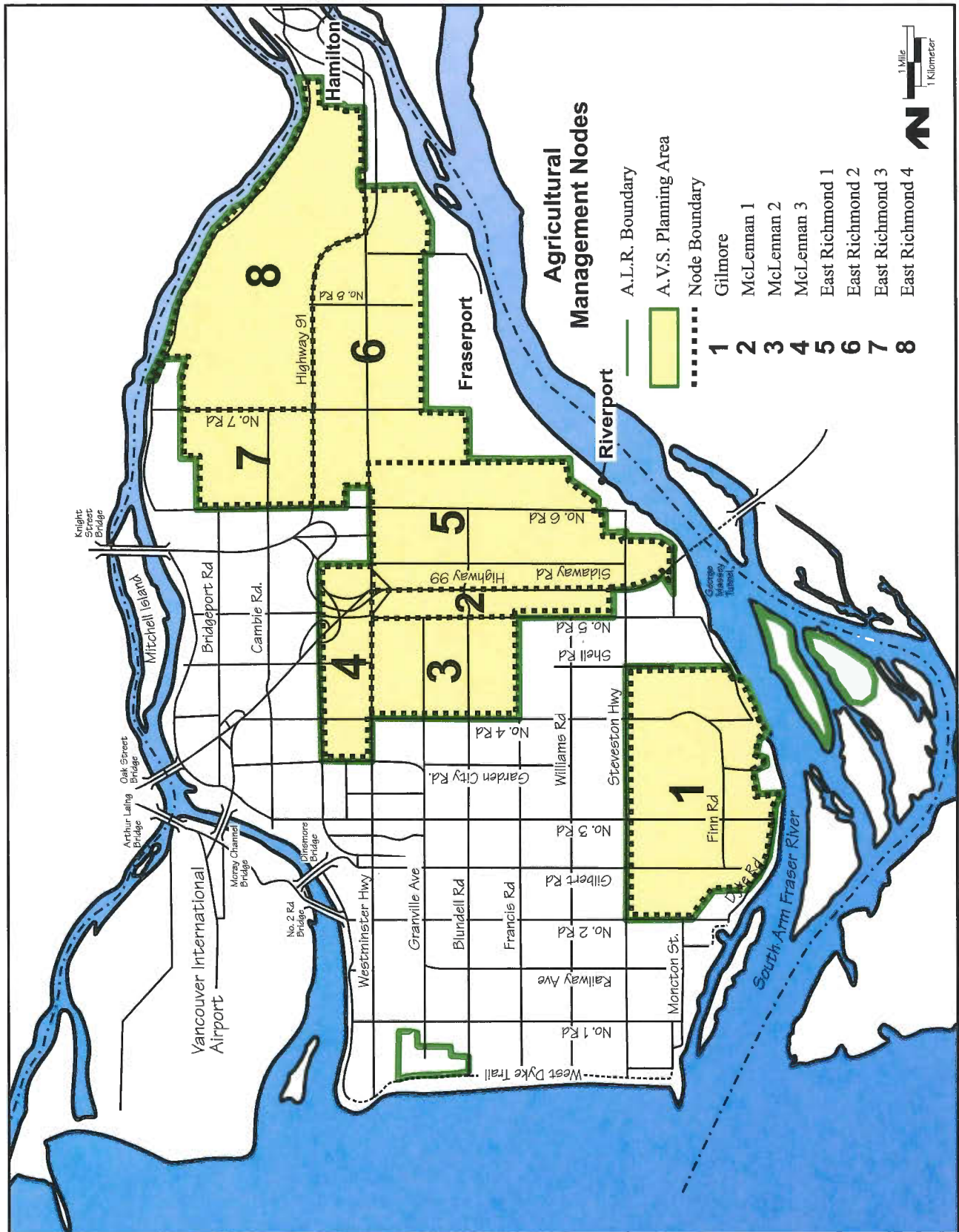
4.1.1 Objectives for the Nodal Management Plans

The intent of the proposed Nodal Management Plans is not to take land out of the ALR, but to develop and support initiatives which:

- Encourage agricultural viability considering unique nodal opportunities and constraints;
- Recognize and respond to node and site-specific issues and concerns;
- Ensure consistency among the Nodal Management Plans and the City-Wide Management Plan for Viable Agriculture.

Figure 5 shows the eight management nodes that have been identified. Where necessary, OCP, Area Plan and Zoning Bylaw amendments would be made to implement a Nodal Management Plan.

Figure 5 - Agricultural Management Nodes



4.2 Gilmore

4.2.1 Introduction

The Gilmore node includes some of Richmond’s finest and most economically productive farmland. The Gilmore node is characterized by mineral soils which are productive and suitable for a wide range of crops. Currently, much of the Gilmore node is in intensive agricultural production with a wide variety of crops including mixed vegetables, forage, and some dairy production. There is very little parcelization which increases agricultural viability. Drainage is not as much of a problem in this area as it is in some of the other nodes.

4.2.2 Key Nodal Issues

Issues that must be addressed in this node:

- Non-farm uses such as a growing number of “country estate” style residences making less land available for agricultural use;
- An increasing level of recreational equestrian activity and trails which can interfere with normal farm practices, damage farm land, and generate waste;
- The proposed residential development in the London-Princess area along the southwestern rural-urban edge may cause problems for agricultural operators, due to potential increased traffic and more urban residents resulting in a higher possibility for nuisance complaints and trespassing, vandalism or theft;
- The proposed recreational trail along the southern boundary of Gilmore may result in an increase in trespassing, vandalism and theft of crops;
- Flooding of the northern end of Gilmore due to excess water from the urban area along the northern boundary;
- Speculation that ALR land may be developed for urban uses.

4.2.3 Recommendations

41. Discourage non-farm uses in the ALR land (see Recommendation 18);
42. Ensure that a “least impact” policy exists to protect farmers from the impacts of the proposed residential development in the London-Princess area:
 - a) Require a proposed AIA (see Recommendation 4) be completed and that appropriate steps be taken to mitigate potential conflicts;
 - b) Whenever potential negative impacts for agriculture may occur, ensure that adequate compensation and/or viable alternatives are available;
 - c) Place emphasis on the positive benefits to potential development initiatives for farm operations, e.g. improved drainage;
 - d) Require the development of an agricultural edge plan (see Recommendation 19), including buffering on the urban side of the edge;
 - e) Ensure that new landowners receive materials about agricultural activity in the area (see Recommendation 30).

43. Ensure that a “least impact” policy exists to protect farmers from the impacts of the proposed recreational trail along the southern boundary of Gilmore:
 - a) Require a proposed AIA (see Recommendation 4) be completed and that appropriate steps be taken to mitigate potential conflicts;
 - b) Whenever potential negative impacts for agriculture may occur, ensure that adequate compensation and/or viable alternatives are available;
 - c) Require that a recreation trail plan be prepared;
 - d) Require the development of an agricultural edge plan (see Recommendation 19), including buffering on the urban side of the edge;
 - e) Require that signs be posted along the trail to increase awareness for trail users about how their behaviors may relate to agricultural viability (see Recommendation 30).

44. Identify the specific problem areas for flooding from the urban areas and develop ways to reduce the impacts of flooding, in concert with the City’s current Engineering Capital Plan process and in consultation with other appropriate City Divisions, Departments and Sections and the agricultural community.

4.3 McLennan 1

4.3.1 Introduction

The McLennan 1 node is the ALR land between No. 5 Road and Highway 99, with the upper boundary of the node being Blundell Road. McLennan 1 is characterized by deep (more than 160 cm) organic soils, which are suitable for a wide range of crops, including cranberries, blueberries, vegetables, and annuals. The node also has a high water table. Currently, little agricultural production is taking place, but there are some grazing and nursery operations.

4.3.2 Key Nodal Issues

The major issues in McLennan 1 relate to the “Community Institutional” designation along the No. 5 Road corridor. This OCP land use designation, which came into effect in 1990, allows churches and other assembly uses on the westerly 110 meters of each parcel. Although the land use designation allows for only agricultural uses on the remaining eastern portion (the “backlands”) of each parcel, it did not require that farming take place. In 1999 the ALC and the City partnered to review the policy and strategy for this district. Current policy under the Amended No. 5 Road Backlands Policy accepted by Council in March 2000 is more stringent because it requires a farm plan and bonding to proceed with the plan. Farming must occur before non-farm uses (e.g. assembly uses) will be approved.

Issues related to the “Community Institutional District” that must be addressed:

- The “backlands” are generally not in agricultural use (a total of 105.3 acres);
- The presence of the Community Institutional District has set a precedent for non-agricultural land use within the ALR, and this non-agricultural use is clearly visible to road traffic along Highway 99;
- The churches have resulted in an increase in traffic into the area which interferes with agricultural operations;
- Although the land has potential for agriculture, farmers are reluctant to farm the land because of speculation that more churches will be built. This also makes a long-term lease difficult to obtain;
- Existing and new fill introduced will disrupt the regional water table, and have a negative impact on the agricultural capability of adjacent land (see Section 3.4.1);
- The land requires some drainage improvements and landowners are reluctant to invest in drainage if farming is not required.

Issues unrelated to the Community Institutional District, which must be addressed:

- There are many small parcels, which are difficult to farm because of field inefficiencies, increased operating costs, intrusion of non-farm residences, and higher than normal land values;
- Parcels are owned by many different people. This makes it difficult to get a lease covering a land area large enough to farm;
- Some degradation of soils has occurred.

4.3.3 Recommendations

45. Mitigate the issues (Section 4.3.2) associated with the Community Institutional District:
 - a) Review the option of rezoning any land parcels which have not been sold for assembly or other uses to restrict the development of future assembly uses in this area and return land to agricultural production;
 - b) Develop an agricultural edge plan for the area, including potential vegetative buffering behind existing churches to clearly differentiate churches on agricultural land from agricultural uses;
 - c) Survey existing assembly properties to rectify any encroachment beyond the westerly 110 metres (360.9 ft.) of the property;
 - d) Continue to support incentives to encourage farming on the backlands.
46. Encourage farming in McLennan 1, with the understanding that the agricultural edge must be taken into consideration. Opportunities for farming in this node include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - Tree farming;
 - Blueberries;
 - Vegetable production, e.g. potatoes, corn, cabbage;
 - Ornamental nursery;
 - Specialty vegetable crops;
 - Organic production;
 - Community or allotment gardens;
 - Hay production.
47. Maximize the agricultural land available for future agricultural uses (see Recommendation 35).

4.4 McLennan 2

4.4.1 Introduction

The McLennan 2 node is the ALR land between No. 4 Road and No. 5 Road, south of Westminster Highway and north of Francis Road. McLennan 2 is characterized by deep (more than 160 cm) organic soils, which are suitable for a wide range of crops, such as cranberries, blueberries, vegetables, and annuals. Much of the node currently used for blueberry production is very productive and this area is the City’s main blueberry producing area. There are also several nurseries, greenhouses, and mixed vegetables. McLennan 2 has a high water table.

4.4.2 Key Nodal Issues

Issues that must be addressed in this node:

- Inadequate drainage of organic soils;
- Any fill introduced will disrupt the regional water table, and have a negative impact on the agricultural capability of adjacent land (see Section 3.4.1);
- Highly parcelized land being under-utilized for agricultural production;
- Small lot sizes are creating pressure for non-agricultural use;
- If existing road rights-of-way were opened and new roads were built, non-farm development may occur and future agricultural viability may be threatened;
- There are many absentee landlords and much of this land has been allowed to deteriorate causing the spread of selected crop diseases and weeds onto adjacent lands;
- The proposed widening of Blundell Road will result in increased traffic into the area, thus making it more difficult to farm;
- Pedestrians regularly use the Shell Road Trail, which has impacted farming operations through theft of crops, vandalism and trespassing;
- Urban complaints about normal farm practices, such as spraying, noise and burning hamper farm operations.

4.4.3 Recommendations

48. Ensure that McLennan 2 is considered a priority area for drainage improvements in the City’s Master Drainage Plan (see Recommendation 7).
49. Discourage non-farm uses of the ALR land (see Recommendation 18).
50. Maximize the agricultural land available in McLennan 2 for future agricultural uses (see Recommendation 35) including the possibility of replotting the land and/or limited access.
51. Blundell Road is the identified access to Fraserport Industrial Lands:
 - a) Require a proposed AIA (see Recommendation 4) be completed and that appropriate steps be taken to mitigate potential conflicts;

- b) Whenever potential negative impacts for agriculture may occur, ensure that viable alternatives are available and fully explored and that there is either:
- no negative impacts on farming;
 - a net benefit to farming; or
 - adequate compensation.
52. Develop an agricultural edge plan (see Recommendation 19) for the Shell Road Trail, including fencing to prevent vandalism and theft and signage to increase awareness about the impacts of trail users on agricultural viability.
53. Liaise with the RCMP to increase awareness about vandalism, trespassing and theft that occurs on lands bordering Shell Road Trail and request their cooperation for policing the area.

4.5 McLennan 3

4.5.1 Introduction

The McLennan 3 node is four parcels of ALR land:

- Two parcels are owned and managed by the City for the Nature Park;
- One parcel is owned and managed by the Department of National Defence;
- One parcel is owned and managed by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans.

McLennan 3 is characterized by deep (more than 160 cm) organic soils, which are suitable for a wide range of crops. However there is no agricultural production in this area. The node also has a high water table.

4.5.2 Key Nodal Issue

- Land ownership. Because the City and Federal Departments own the four parcels, the land is not available for use by Richmond farmers.
- These parcels are being considered for non-farm uses (e.g. federal decommissioning, a trade and exhibition centre, sports fields, industrial uses, etc.).

4.5.3 Recommendations

54. Identify development options for McLennan 3 parcels which include:

- Having it totally farmed,
- Maximizing benefits to agriculture and farming if used for non-farm land uses,
- Consider City ownership of the land.

4.6 East Richmond 1

4.6.1 Introduction

The East Richmond 1 node is the ALR land between Sidaway and No. 6 Road.

East Richmond 1 is characterized by predominantly deep (more than 160 cm) organic soils, suitable for a wide range of crops, including cranberries, blueberries, mixed vegetables, nurseries, and forage crops. The node also has a high water table. Much of this node is presently in intensive and varied agricultural production, with blueberries, mixed vegetables, greenhouse operations, cranberries, nurseries and forage crops.

4.6.2 Key Nodal Issues

Issues that must be addressed in this node:

- Drainage of the organic soils is inadequate;
- The proposed widening of Blundell Road will result in increased traffic into the area, thus making it more difficult to farm;
- The routing of traffic through the ALR to service the increasing development of the Riverport and the Fraserport Industrial Lands at the south end of this node will result in increased traffic that will interfere with farm vehicles and operations.

4.6.3 Recommendations

55. Ensure that East Richmond 1 is considered a priority area for drainage improvements in the City’s Master Drainage Plan (See Recommendation 7).
56. Ensure that any widening of Blundell Road (see Recommendation 51) results in benefits for farming and has minimal impacts on farming.
57. Ensure that a “least impact” policy exists to protect farmers from the impacts of the increased development of the Riverport and the Fraserport Industrial Lands:
 - a) Require a proposed AIA (see Recommendation 4) be completed and that appropriate steps be taken to mitigate potential conflicts;
 - b) Whenever potential negative impacts for agriculture may occur, ensure that viable alternatives are available and fully explored and that there is either:
 - no negative impacts on farming;
 - a net benefit to farming; or
 - adequate compensation.
 - c) Place emphasis on positive benefits to development initiatives for farm operations, e.g. improved drainage;
 - d) Require the development of an agricultural edge plan (see Recommendation 19), including buffering on the urban side of the edge;
 - e) Review the development strategy for the Fraserport Industrial Lands to find potential linkages with the agricultural industry, and the potential for joint initiatives.

4.7 East Richmond 2

4.7.1 Introduction

The East Richmond 2 node is the ALR land South of Highway 91. This node is characterized by mineral soils which are suitable for a wide range of crops. Currently, much of this node is in intensive agricultural production. Agricultural production includes forage crops, livestock, nurseries, greenhouse operations, mixed vegetables, and some blueberries. This area includes large areas of idle land, landfills, and golf courses.

4.7.2 Key Nodal Issues

Issues that must be addressed in this node:

- Drainage of the soils is inadequate;
- The proposed widening of Blundell Road will result in increased traffic into the area, making it more difficult to farm;
- There are several large parcels of land that are idle at this time.

4.7.3 Recommendations

58. Ensure that East Richmond 2 is considered a priority area for drainage improvements in the City’s Master Drainage Plan (see Recommendation 7).
59. Review the proposal to widen Blundell Road (see Recommendation 51).
60. Use any further developments of the industrial areas (Fraserport Lands) as a means to implement drainage improvements.

4.8 East Richmond 3

4.8.1 Introduction

The East Richmond 3 node is the ALR land west of No. 7 Road and north of Highway 91. This node is characterized by mineral soils, which are suitable for a wide range of crops. Much of the node is currently in agricultural production. This area is primarily used for livestock, forage crops, and cranberries. However there is also some mixed vegetable and nursery production.

4.8.2 Key Nodal Issues

- No issues have been identified at this time.

4.8.3 Recommendations

61. Maintain the existing drainage and infrastructure initiatives in this node.

4.9 East Richmond 4

4.9.1 Introduction

The East Richmond 4 node is the ALR land east of No. 7 Road and north of Highway 91. This node is characterized by medium (40-160 cm) to deep (more than 160 cm) organic soils, which are suitable for a wide range of crops such as cranberries, blueberries, vegetables, and annuals. The node has a high water table. Much of the node is currently in intensive agricultural production. Most of the area is dedicated to cranberry production, with some mixed vegetables, livestock, blueberries and greenhouse operations between the railroad track and Dyke Road.

4.9.2 Key Nodal Issues

Issues that must be addressed in this node:

- The soils require water table control in order to provide adequate drainage without over-draining them;
- Irrigation in the summer months may be required;
- The proposed mid-island dyke along No. 8 Road will impact significantly on agricultural production (see Section 3.2.4);
- Existing and new fill will disrupt the regional water table, and have a negative impact on the agricultural capability of adjacent land (see Section 3.4.1).

4.9.3 Recommendations

62. Review the use of fill on organic soils (see Recommendation 18 c).
63. Request the Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection to investigate the viability of rebuilding and upgrading the perimeter dyke around the eastern tip of Richmond along the North Arm of the Fraser River, instead of the proposed mid-island dyke.
64. Maintain the existing drainage and infrastructure initiatives in this node.

5. Implementation Strategy

An Implementation Strategy is an important component of any planning process. Commitment to the Implementation Strategy will ensure that the recommendations in the AVS are implemented according to priority.

Successful implementation will require commitment from the City, the AAC, the RFI, ALC, senior governments, agricultural community and the public.

It is recommended that:

- Various City staff be assigned as SALs (see Recommendation 3) to facilitate implementation;
- The RFI consider having a dedicated person responsible for ongoing liaison with the City. The RFI may be better able to maintain a commitment to implementation if a specific person is identified for the task.

Funding support will be necessary for some of the recommendations in the AVS. In cases where funding is required, there may be ways that the City, AAC, RFI, ALC, senior governments, agricultural community stakeholders and the public can reduce costs by involving other partners in the implementation. It may also be feasible to undertake some recommendations on a trial basis through pilot projects, which could also be cost-shared with appropriate partners.

5.1 Monitoring Process

A comprehensive monitoring process, beginning at six months after the adoption of the AVS by Council and evolving to an annual process, is important for ongoing implementation of the recommendations.

Monitoring will serve to:

- Review the progress towards implementing recommendations;
- Determine the effectiveness of the AVS and its impact on agricultural viability;
- Provide motivation and support for the implementation process;
- Provide the opportunity for an AVS update and revision as required.

A recommended monitoring process is as follows:

Review One (Six months after adoption)

- General meeting of the Core Team and the proposed AAC (possibly with the Consultant Team) to review progress to date.

Review Two (One year after adoption)

- The proposed AAC and appropriate City staff (possibly with the Consultant Team) prepare a “Report Card” on implementation to date;
- The proposed AAC and appropriate City staff (possibly with the Consultant Team) to review the “Report Card”;
- Update the AVS with changes and revisions as appropriate (possibly with the Consultant Team).

Further reviews should be undertaken annually, or as required, and follow a similar process to Review Two.

5.2 Implementing the Recommendations

This section identifies some key recommendations that can be implemented in the shorter term, and provides details about their implementation, key participants to be involved, and some indications of the results expected from the implementation. The early implementation of some recommendations will be encouraging signals to the agricultural sector.

Recommendation 1) Establish a City Agricultural Advisory Committee of Council (AAC).

Implementation Detail	Potential Partners	Results Expected
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Develop AAC terms of reference: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AAC to advise on day to day issues such as proposed bylaw and OCP amendments and broader initiatives such as agricultural studies and plans; • AAC to play active role in AVS implementation; • AAC to meet monthly, or as required; • Assist AAC with person from City staff or person paid to provide support to committee; • AAC to have committed, effective chair. ✓ Committee Membership: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voting Members: The Committee shall consist of nine (9) voting members appointed by Council, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Five (5) “farming representatives” chosen from nominations by the Richmond Farmers Institute. A “farming representative” is defined as a farmer who derives a majority of his/her income from farming; ○ Two (2) farming representatives from the general agricultural community (nursery, livestock, equestrian, greenhouses, crops, etc.); ○ One (1) representative from the Advisory Committee on the Environment ○ One (1) representative from the community at large • Committee Advisors (Non-voting Members): The Committee shall also consist of the following including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A City Councillor Agricultural Liaison; ○ A representative from BCMAFF; ○ A representative from the ALC; ○ A staff member from the Engineering/Public Works Department(s); ○ A staff member from the Urban Development Division; ○ A staff member from the RCMP; and ○ Others as necessary. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Policy Planning Department ✓ RFI 	<p>AAC to provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advice on bylaws and OCP amendments; • Advice on applications for development in and adjacent to the ALR • Advice on soil permit applications • Assistance with policy development • Improved agricultural awareness

Recommendation 3) Designate City Staff Agricultural Liaisons (SALs), with the Policy Planning Department Liaison as the lead SAL to ensure coordination.

Implementation Detail	Potential Partners	Results Expected
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Publicize the SALs as people to assist the agricultural sector to access information about City Bylaws, operations and services, address agricultural issues and concerns, and contribute to various agricultural projects; ✓ Develop a “flow chart” to facilitate access to information required by the agricultural sector. This “flow chart” may include information about policies and bylaws, processes involved for development approvals, growth and diversification information, etc; ✓ Have the SALs play a key role in Implementation of the AVS. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Policy Planning Department 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farm community to have a designated place to address issues; • Farm community to have improved relationship with City

Recommendation 4) Introduce an Agricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) process.

Implementation Detail	Potential Partners	Results Expected
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Use the AIA for all proposed projects involving land use changes or developments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within the ALR; • Adjacent to the ALR; or • Outside the ALR for projects which may have an impact on agriculture. ✓ Examples of where to use the AIA: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decisions with respect to servicing and infrastructure, e.g. transportation corridors; • Decisions with respect to recreational trails; • New or proposed residential developments. ✓ Develop criteria, e.g. drainage/irrigation implications, air quality, noise, transportation and traffic, and others, for the AIA in conjunction with BCMAFF, the ALC, the proposed AAC (See Recommendation 1), and others as appropriate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Policy Planning Department ✓ Other City Divisions / Departments / Sections as required ✓ RFI 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better capacity to assess longer term impacts of decisions on agricultural land and agricultural viability; • Improved communication among City Departments concerning agricultural issues

Recommendation 5) Maintain an Agricultural Data System.

Implementation Detail	Potential Partners	Results Expected
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Update and expand the scope of the Agricultural Profile, the Agricultural Land Use Inventory, and the Geographic Information System every three years or sooner to maintain current information about the agricultural sector; ✓ Continue to engage in innovative research partnerships with groups (such as AAFC, BCMAFF and others) to determine agricultural trends in Richmond; ✓ Monitor changes in the agricultural sector to determine issues of concern and changes in overall viability, using the following possible indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indicators which track land use and land availability: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Hectares (or acres) of ALR land in Richmond; ○ Hectares (or acres) of ALR land which is Farm Class; ○ Hectares (or acres) of ALR land available for sale or lease. • Indicators which track farm viability and the overall health of the agricultural sector: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Annual number of applications for exclusion of land from the ALR; ○ Annual number of applications, approvals and rejections for non-farm use and subdivision in the ALR; ○ Net Returns from Agriculture; ○ Economic Diversity Index. ✓ Integrate the data into ongoing City operations and decision-making wherever possible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Policy Planning Department ✓ RFI ✓ Proposed AAC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved system for monitoring changes in the agricultural sector • Provides information for ensuring implementation of the AVS

Recommendation 6) Encourage regular communication among the agricultural sector and the City, provincial and federal servicing and infrastructure departments.

Implementation Detail	Potential Partners	Results Expected
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Formalize the City-Farmer Drainage committee ✓ Establish terms of reference and ensure involvement from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the agricultural sector; • Engineering and Public Works Division. • and others as appropriate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Engineering and Public Works Division ✓ Policy Planning Department ✓ RFI 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved communication between City and farm community with respect to servicing and infrastructure • Improved drainage for the City and agricultural sector.

Recommendation 7) Support the City’s Master Drainage Plan.

Implementation Detail	Potential Partners	Results Expected
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Identify and ensure drainage improvements to the ALR in order of priority and according to ARDSA performance standards; ✓ Encourage sufficient notification to the agricultural sector of ditch-cleaning plans; ✓ Encourage the agricultural sector to cooperate with ditch-cleaning practices by providing appropriate right-of-ways; ✓ Encourage the agricultural sector to support ditch-sidecasting activity where it does not interfere with normal farm practices and/or agricultural capability of the soils; ✓ Require the proposed AIA (see Recommendation 4) be completed for all servicing and infrastructure projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Engineering and Public Works Division ✓ RFI 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved communication between City and farm community with respect to servicing and infrastructure • Improved drainage for the City and agricultural sector.

Recommendation 24) The Agricultural Advisory Committee, farming community, City staff and other stakeholders shall work together to study, analyze, form options and strategies to address issues of concern around ESAs and the environment.

Implementation Detail	Potential Partners	Results Expected
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Issues of concern around ESA's in the ALR that should be addressed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land use; • Drainage, irrigation and ditch maintenance; • Land clearing; • Weed control; • Crop loss due to wildlife and birds. ✓ Address other issues of concern around ESA's in the ALR and the environment that may arise. ✓ Ensure that management strategies allow for “least impact” on agricultural viability and whenever agricultural viability may be impacted, ensure that adequate compensation and/or viable alternatives are available. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Policy Planning Department ✓ Proposed AAC ✓ City departments and divisions as required ✓ ALC ✓ BCMAFF 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better management of ESAs in Richmond • Improved sensitivity by farmers to importance of environmental issues in ALR

Recommendation 26) Review City management policies and bylaws.

Implementation Detail	Potential Partners	Results Expected
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The review to address the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess the implications for farming; • Work towards consistency and compatibility (where not in conflict with other legislation) with the provisions of the Farm Practices Protection Act and the Guide to Bylaw Development in Farming Areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Policy Planning Department ✓ Proposed AAC ✓ City departments and divisions as required ✓ ALC ✓ BCMAFF 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better management of agricultural lands in Richmond

Recommendation 27) Consult with the Agricultural Advisory Committee and the farm community (together with the Advisory Committee on the Environment and other stakeholders) in the review of existing ESAs in the ALR.

Implementation Detail	Potential Partners	Results Expected
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Refine and clarify the inventory and functions of the existing ESAs; ✓ Assess the interaction between agriculture and the ESAs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Policy Planning Department ✓ Proposed AAC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better management of ESAs in Richmond • Improved sensitivity by farmers to importance of environmental issues in ALR

Recommendation 19) Develop comprehensive agricultural edge plans for areas.

Implementation Detail	Potential Partners	Results Expected
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Areas for agricultural edge plans are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The west and north edges of Gilmore; • The west edge of McLennan 2; • Behind the outer ring of houses in McLennan 2; • Shell Road Trail; • Behind the assembly uses on No. 5 Road; • North edge of Fraserport Industrial Lands. ✓ Edge plans to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An inventory of existing and potential uses and conflicts; • A site-specific management plan with design guidelines; • A proposed AIA (see Recommendation 4) • Consultation with the ALC, BCMAFF, the proposed AAC, and review of relevant resources; • Consultation with landowners on both sides of the agricultural edge; • An appropriate time-frame for implementation; • Mediation to mitigate any conflicts while an agricultural edge plan is being developed, or where buffering is not in place. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Policy Planning Department ✓ Proposed AAC ✓ Parks and Recreation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved understanding among non-farm community of role of agriculture on ALR • Improved rural urban relations

Recommendation 13) Review the Zoning Bylaw 5300 and prepare information, options and recommendations to improve its effectiveness. This review includes examining the following items and other actions not yet identified:

Implementation Detail	Potential Partners	Results Expected
<p>✓ Review Zoning Bylaw 5300 in consultation with the public and prepare information, options and recommendations to improve its effectiveness in supporting agricultural viability. This review includes the following items and other actions not yet identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the current list of uses permitted in the AG1 zone and update it to reflect changes in Provincial legislation and the objectives of achieving agricultural viability; • Review the AG1 zoning regulations for residential uses on farms and for non-farm residences in the ALR to determine how to better achieve agricultural viability; • Review the non-agricultural uses currently permitted in the AG1 zone to better achieve agricultural viability; • Review how to better manage building materials, storage and other accessory farm uses; • Review the current policy on the storage of farm equipment/vehicles related to the farm operation as a principal use (the storage of farm equipment/vehicles is currently an accessory use); • Review all minimum and maximum property and building setbacks for residences in the ALR to minimize conflicts with adjacent uses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Policy Planning Department ✓ Other City Divisions / Departments / Sections as required ✓ RFI ✓ Agricultural Land Commission ✓ Ministry of Agriculture and Food 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bylaw to more closely reflect commitment to agricultural viability • Bylaw wording to support agricultural sector.

Recommendation 14) Review the roadside stand regulations in Business Regulation Bylaw 7148 and prepare information, options and recommendations to improve its effectiveness and achieve agricultural viability.

Implementation Detail	Potential Partners	Results Expected
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Review Class C which allows the potential creation of large roadside grocery outlets on ALR land; ✓ Review the requirement for farming a minimum of 20 acres of land in the bylaw which is restrictive and difficult to enforce. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Policy Planning Department ✓ Other City Divisions / Departments / Sections as required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bylaw to more closely reflect commitment to agricultural viability • Bylaw wording to support agricultural sector.

Recommendation 18) Review the following non-farm uses of ALR land and prepare information, options and recommendations. This review includes examining the following items and other actions not yet identified:

Implementation Detail	Potential Partners	Results Expected
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Review feasibility of amalgamating smaller lots to larger ones where possible; ✓ Restrict upgrading of existing roads and development of new roads unless there is a direct or net benefit to farming; ✓ Discourage the use of fill on organic soils, except for the following agricultural purposes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When required to ensure a solid foundation for a farm residence or other structure related to the agricultural operation; • To provide a road base for access which benefits agriculture; ✓ Limit recreational uses of ALR land: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage dyke and perimeter recreational trails; • Work with agricultural community, equestrian community and recreational community to ensure that recreation uses adjacent to or within the ALR are compatible with farm uses and have positive benefits to farming. ✓ Ensure that a “least disruption to farmers” policy exists to protect farmers from the impacts of recreational uses by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requiring the proposed AIA (Recommendation 4) be completed for new recreational uses; • Ensuring that whenever potential impacts for agriculture may occur, that adequate compensation and/or viable alternatives are available; • Increasing awareness among equestrian owners about “private property” and public roads and trails, and the impact horses can have on agricultural land; • Preparing agricultural edge plans for recreation uses, dykes and perimeter trails in and adjacent to the ALR; • Ensuring that suitable facilities, e.g. toilets and garbage cans, are provided to eliminate trespassing and littering on existing recreational trails; • Ensuring that no financial costs are incurred by farmers due to recreational trails or activities; • Investigating the feasibility of developing an insurance policy and a “save harmless policy” to protect farmers from liability and property damage as a result of non-agricultural activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Division ✓ RFI ✓ Proposed AAC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensures that farming is the primary use of ALR land; • Ensures all existing and proposed non-farm uses of ALR land do not interfere with normal farm practices; • Ensures that City policies related to Parks and Recreation, support overall agricultural viability

Recommendation 30) Institute an information program to increase public awareness and commitment for agriculture.

Implementation Detail	Potential Partners	Results Expected
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Develop appropriate materials to share with all residents to provide them with information about agricultural activity in their area, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The type of farming in the area; • Examples of normal farm practices they may experience; • A copy of the BCMAFF publication “The Countryside and You”; • A list of appropriate people to direct questions and concerns, such as the proposed SAL (see Recommendation 3), ALC, BCMAFF, AAFC, and others; • A “Country User Code” to identify appropriate behaviour in agricultural areas. ✓ Develop an agricultural signage program. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Place signs along roads used by farm vehicles, along recreational trails, and incorporate signs into agricultural edge planning; • Ensure that signage focuses on “positive wording” as opposed to “directives”, such as the following examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In areas where farm vehicles may be traveling, “Richmond farmers with slow moving vehicles use these roads too – support your local farm community”. ○ Where vandalism and trespassing issues occur, “This crop was planted by a member of your local farm community – please respect the farmer’s livelihood” • Ensure all signs are visibly similar, and incorporate the recommended “logo” or visual symbol (Recommendation 37 a). ✓ Encourage the ALC to develop signs to indicate the location and extent of the ALR. ✓ Develop a brochure that celebrates the City’s agricultural tradition and history. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasize the relationship between the City’s corporate vision statement (see Section 2.5) and how agriculture helps achieve that vision; • Prepare an agricultural calendar that shows key agricultural events in the area, harvest times, etc. ✓ Encourage linkages between the agricultural community and the media to facilitate public education and awareness; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Proposed AAC ✓ Policy Planning Department ✓ Transportation Department and other City Divisions / Departments / Sections as required ✓ RFI ✓ Other levels of government 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved public understanding and awareness of agriculture and its role in the community • Reduced incidence of complaints from farmers about public misuse of ALR land

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Implementation Detail	Potential Partners	Results Expected
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Create an agricultural business profile to provide information on agriculture as a business opportunity. ✓ Develop an information package for farmers about agricultural policies and bylaws, and make this package available to the RFI and place it on the City website (see Recommendation 16). ✓ Explore the opportunities to hold a special event or regular seasonal activity to promote local produce and celebrate the City’s agricultural tradition and history. 		

Recommendation 31) Create opportunities for Council, City staff and others to tour the agricultural lands and learn about the role agriculture plays in the City.

Implementation Detail	Potential Partners	Results Expected
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Prepare appropriate lists of opportunities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Proposed AAC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved understanding and awareness of agriculture and its role in the community among Council and City staff

Recommendation 37) Develop a “Buy Local” marketing initiative to increase demand for locally grown agricultural products.

Implementation Detail	Potential Partners	Results Expected
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Develop a “Taste of Richmond” logo or symbol, to appear on all agricultural communications and signs, and which could also be used by growers to label their products; ✓ Institute a weekly Farmers’ Market in cooperating school yards or other city facilities; ✓ Support local growers by purchasing locally-grown landscape materials and food products for City use wherever possible; ✓ Identify options to support access to farm direct markets along Steveston Highway where current traffic patterns discourage stopping at farms selling local products; ✓ Develop a list of local agricultural products and when and where they are available, and circulate the list to local restaurants, ferries, schools and businesses to encourage linkages with Richmond agricultural producers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Business Liaison and Development Section ✓ Tourism Richmond ✓ Policy Planning Department ✓ Transportation Department ✓ RFI 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased economic activity in the agricultural sector • Improved rural urban relationships

Recommendation 38) Undertake a market study project to assist farmers to understand their local market.

Implementation Detail	Potential Partners	Results Expected
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Study to include items like the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Products desired by restaurants, and ethnic, specialty and niche products; • Expected quality and service features; • Expected product availability requirements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Business Liaison and Development Section ✓ Policy Planning Department ✓ RFI 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased options for agricultural viability will result from the study • Higher amounts of revenue may be generated by agricultural sector

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7. Appendices

- I. Legislative and Policy Context
- II. List of Recommendations

Appendix I. Legislative and Policy Context

This section provides brief summaries of some of the legislative Acts and regulations that have an impact on agriculture in Richmond.

A. Federal Context

1. No Federal Agricultural Viability Policy

There is no integrated Federal vision or comprehensive agricultural and rural development/diversification policy, or program to support agricultural viability in Canada.

2. Canadian Environmental Protection Act (CEPA)

The purpose of the CEPA is to protect the environment and the health of Canadians from toxic substances and other pollutants. CEPA has regulations on many items, including managing toxic substances, clean air and water, controlling and moving waste, and enforcement.

3. Fisheries Act

The Fisheries Act contains regulations pertaining to conservation and protection of fish and fish habitat and prevention of pollution and / or obstruction of any water frequented by fish. The Fisheries Act is administered by DFO.

4. National Farm Building Code

The National Farm Building Code is published by the National Research Council through its Canadian Commission on Building and Fire Codes. The rationale for having special requirements for farm buildings, as distinct from other buildings, is based on the low occupancy load, the remote location of typical farm structures, or the special nature of the occupancies involved.

B. Provincial Context

1. No Provincial Agricultural Viability Policy

There is no integrated Provincial vision or comprehensive agricultural and rural development/diversification policy, or program to support agricultural viability in British Columbia.

2. Agricultural Land Commission Act (ALCA)

In 1973, the ALC was given the mandate to establish the ALR, in order to (1) preserve agricultural land, (2) encourage the establishment and maintenance of farms, and (3) use the land in the ALR in a manner compatible with agricultural purposes.

Part of the ALC’s mandate is to encourage municipalities to support farm use of agricultural land in their planning and policies. The ALCA ensures that there is a strong linkage between the Act and any plans and bylaws related to the ALR. All plans that apply to ALR land must be consistent with the regulations and orders of the Commission. Any inconsistent element of a plan is of no effect.¹⁸ In addition, subject to the requirements of the ALCA, individuals and government agencies who wish to alter the boundaries of the ALR, subdivide land in the ALR, or use ALR land for non-farm purposes, must obtain the prior approval of the ALC. If this approval is granted, the applicant must still secure approval from the relevant local government.

3. Farm Practices Protection (Right To Farm) Act (FPPA)

This legislation, passed in 1996, offers protection to farmers who use normal and accepted farm practices that are consistent with proper and accepted customs and standards. The legislation was designed to establish a process to manage conflicts between and among neighbours and support farmers through protection from unwarranted nuisance complaints about farming.¹⁹

4. Fish Protection Act

The Fish Protection Act is a cornerstone of the BC Fisheries Strategy. The four objectives of the legislation are:

- To ensure water for fish;
- To protect and restore fish habitat;
- To focus on riparian protection and enhancement;
- To strengthen local environmental planning.

C. Regional Context

1. Greater Vancouver Regional District (GVRD) Livable Region Strategic Plan

The GVRD’s Livable Region Strategic Plan incorporates policies, population and growth targets and maps based on the following four fundamental strategies:

- To protect the Green Zone;
- To build complete communities;
- To achieve a compact metropolitan region;
- To increase transportation choices.

¹⁸ Planning For Agriculture (PFA), p. 7-30.

¹⁹ Strengthening Farming in British Columbia, A Guide to the Implementation of the Farm Practices Protection (Right to Farm) Act.

In the GVRD Livable Region Strategic Plan, agriculture within the green zone is recognized as a “working landscape” for agricultural production and an important component to preserve the natural habitat and to increase the overall livability of the region.

The GVRD Board established an Agriculture Advisory Committee in 1992 to advise the Board and other levels of government on agricultural issues and to raise the profile of agriculture in the region.

2. Land Title Act

The Land Title Act is administered by the local approving officer, under the authority of the Solicitor General. The Act has been amended to allow the local approving officer to refuse a subdivision plan if the following apply:

- Inadequate buffers or separation of the development from farming at the time of subdivision would cause unreasonable interference with farming operations;
- The location of highways and highway allowances would unreasonably or unnecessarily increase access to land in the ALR.

3. Local Government Act (formerly the Municipal Act)

A sub-area plan such as this AVS must observe the same content requirements as a broader-based community wide OCP²⁰, with the intent of providing greater focus on issue identification and problem solving as well as providing for broad objectives and a vision for the future.

The Local Government Act contains provisions empowering local governments to adopt farm bylaws and to regulate farm operations subject to the approval of the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries. Additionally, the Local Government Act states that local governments must not adopt zoning bylaws that prohibit or restrict agriculture unless approved by the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries. Particularly important sections of the Local Government Act are those concerned with Agricultural Plan adoption by bylaw.

4. Waste Management Act

The Waste Management Act is the central piece of legislation relating to the disposal of all types of waste in BC. The “Code of Agricultural Practice for Waste Management” regulation provides specific requirements for the handling and storage of agricultural wastes. Farm operations that comply with the Code are exempt from the need to obtain a waste disposal permit under the Waste Management Act.

5. Weed Control Act

The Weed Control Act places responsibility for control of noxious weeds upon occupiers of land. It provides for appointment of inspectors to ensure compliance and, failing that, for a method by which they can control weeds with costs recovered from the occupier. Weed Control Committees may be established by municipal councils to administer the Act within a municipality. This Act is administered on a seasonal basis.

²⁰ PFA, p. 7-30.

D. Municipal Context

1. Richmond Bylaws

The following bylaws have implications for agriculture:

Bylaw 2218: Control of Noxious Weeds and Noxious Weed Seeds

Bylaw 4183: Regulating the Discharge of Firearms

Bylaw 4564: Fire Prevention

Bylaw 5300: Zoning Bylaw

Bylaw 5560: Sign Bylaw

Bylaw 5637: Waterworks and Water Rates

Bylaw 6349: Unsightly Premises

Bylaw 6983: Nuisance Prohibition

Bylaw 6989: Public Health Protection

Bylaw 7016: Annual Property Tax Rates

Bylaw 7137: Animal, Bird and Beekeeping Regulation

Bylaw 7148: Business Regulation

Policies 5006 and 5035 (rescinded and replaced by Amended No. 5 Road Backlands Policy in March 2000)

2. Richmond Official Community Plan (OCP)

An OCP is mandated by British Columbia’s Local Government Act. It is a legal document for planning and managing the City’s social, economic, and physical future. The OCP ensures that land use, services, and the natural environment are managed and coordinated to enhance the well being of the City.

There are several objectives associated with agriculture in the OCP. The two most directly related to agriculture include:

- To “continue to protect all farmlands in the ALR” ;
- To “maintain and enhance agricultural viability and productivity in Richmond”.²¹

Other City objectives relate to transportation, parks, open spaces and trails, services and infrastructure, and development permit guidelines.

The City’s corporate vision as stated in the OCP is “that the City of Richmond be the most appealing, livable, and well-managed community in Canada”. This vision is reflected in the AVS.

²¹ OCP, p 17.

Appendix II. List of Recommendations

Agricultural Decision Making Strategy (Section 3.1)

1. Establish a City Agricultural Advisory Committee of Council (AAC).
 - a) Have the AAC play the key advisory role in implementing the AVS;
 - b) Require all City departments to seek input from the AAC when major departmental initiatives are proposed as part of their planning strategy, where agriculture is affected;
 - c) Committee Membership:
 - i) Voting Members:

The Committee shall consist of nine (9) voting members appointed by Council, including:

 - Five (5) “farming representatives” chosen from nominations by the Richmond Farmers Institute. A “farming representative” is defined as a farmer who derives a majority of his/her income from farming;
 - Two (2) farming representatives from the general agricultural community (nursery, livestock, equestrian, greenhouses, crops, etc.);
 - One (1) representative from the Advisory Committee on the Environment.
 - One (1) representative from the community at large.
 - ii) Committee Advisors (Non-voting Members):

The Committee shall also consist of the following advisors including:

 - A City Councillor Agricultural Liaison (CAL);
 - A representative from BCMAFF;
 - A representative from the ALC;
 - A staff member from the Engineering/Public Works Department(s);
 - A staff member from the Urban Development Division (Staff Agricultural Liaison);
 - A staff member from the RCMP; and
 - Others as necessary.
2. Maintain the existing ALR boundary and the ALR land base in Richmond, and do not support a change to the boundary or a loss of ALR land unless:
 - there is a substantial net benefit to agriculture; and
 - the agricultural stakeholders are fully consulted.
3. Designate various City Staff as Agricultural Liaisons (SALs), with the Policy Planning Department Liaison as the lead SAL to ensure coordination.

- a) Have the CAL/SALs play a key support role in the implementation of the AVS and supporting the AAC;
 - b) Publicize the SALs as people to assist the agricultural sector to access information about City bylaws, operations, and services, address agricultural issues and concerns, and contribute to various agricultural projects;
 - c) Develop a flow chart to facilitate access to information required by the agricultural sector. This flow chart may include information about policies and bylaws, processes involved for planning and development approvals, growth and diversification information, etc.
4. Introduce an Agricultural Impact Assessment process (AIA).
- a) Use the AIA for all proposed projects involving land use changes or development:
 - i) Within the ALR;
 - ii) Adjacent to the ALR;
 - iii) Outside the ALR for projects which may have an impact on agriculture, such as transportation corridors, recreational trails, new residential developments, and others.
 - b) Develop criteria, (e.g. drainage/irrigation implications, air quality, noise, transportation and traffic, and others), for the AIA in conjunction with BCMAFF, the ALC, the proposed AAC (see Recommendation 1), and others as appropriate.
5. Maintain an Agricultural Data System.
- a) Update and expand the scope of the Agricultural Profile, the Agricultural Land Use Inventory, and the Geographic Information System every three years or sooner to maintain current information about the agricultural sector;
 - b) Continue to engage in innovative research partnerships with groups such as Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC), BC Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries (BCMAFF), Greater Vancouver Regional District (GVRD), University of British Columbia (UBC), Simon Fraser University (SFU) and others to determine agricultural trends in Richmond;
 - c) Monitor changes in the agricultural sector to determine issues of concern and changes in overall viability, using the following possible indicators:
 - i) Indicators which track land use and land availability:
 - Hectares (or acres) of ALR land in Richmond;
 - Hectares (or acres) of ALR land which is Farm Class;
 - Hectares (or acres) of ALR land available for sale or lease.
 - ii) Indicators which track farm viability and the overall health of the agricultural sector:
 - Annual number of applications, approvals and rejections for exclusion of land from the ALR;
 - Annual number of applications, approvals and rejections for non-farm use and subdivision in the ALR;
 - Net Returns from Agriculture;
 - Economic Diversity Index.

- d) Integrate the data into ongoing City operations and decision making wherever possible.

Services and Infrastructure Strategy (Section 3.2)

6. Encourage regular communication among the agricultural sector and the City, provincial and federal servicing and infrastructure departments by formalizing the City Staff-Farmer Drainage Committee and by establishing terms of reference and involving the agricultural sector, Engineering and Public Works Division, and others as appropriate (e.g. Policy Planning, Environmental Programs, Transportation, etc.).
7. Support the City's Master Drainage Plan.
 - a) Identify and ensure that drainage improvements to the ALR occur in order of priority and according to ARDSA performance standards;
 - b) Ensure that drainage improvements are considered in a comprehensive manner in consultation with the agricultural community and relevant City departments;
 - c) Encourage sufficient notification to the agricultural sector of ditch-cleaning plans in order to achieve beneficial, effective and timely agricultural drainage;
 - d) Encourage the agricultural sector to cooperate with ditch-cleaning practices by providing appropriate right-of-ways;
 - e) Encourage the agricultural sector to support ditch-sidecasting activity where it does not interfere with normal farm practices and/or agricultural capability of the soils;
 - f) Require the proposed AIA (see Recommendation 4) be completed for all servicing and infrastructure projects.
8. Request the Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection to investigate the viability of rebuilding and upgrading the perimeter dyke around the eastern tip of Richmond along the North Arm of the Fraser River, instead of the proposed mid-Island dyke.
9. Review and designate "farm travel" routes for travel between agricultural areas:
 - a) Use recognizable signage to endorse these routes for farm vehicles;
 - b) Review the wording of "Respect Slow Moving Farm Vehicles" signs and consider "Yield To Farm Vehicles";
 - c) Develop new road design guidelines to ensure that the outermost lane and shoulder in combination have a minimum of 4.3 meters (14 feet) in lateral clearance to accommodate the width of farm vehicles;
 - d) Review options to minimize the impact of farm traffic on non-farm traffic by providing safe turn-offs for farm vehicles on identified agricultural corridors carrying high volumes of traffic.
10. Review Official Community Plan Transportation Policy 4(d) which states "Restrict the development of new major roads in the ALR to avoid jeopardizing farm viability, except for service roads intended to serve adjacent industrial land" to:
 - a) Consider removal of the phrase "except for service roads intended to serve adjacent industrial land" to limit future major road development on ALR land that does not serve the viability of agriculture;

- b) Ensure that a “least impact” policy exists to protect farmers from the impacts of possible transportation corridors through the ALR by:
 - i) Requiring the proposed AIA (see Recommendation 4) be completed for new road projects and that appropriate steps be taken to mitigate potential conflicts;
 - ii) Ensuring that whenever potential negative impacts for agriculture may occur, that adequate compensation and/or viable alternatives are available and fully explored;
 - iii) Placing emphasis on positive benefits of transportation initiatives for farm operations (e.g. improved drainage and access).

City Policies and Bylaws Strategy (Section 3.3)

11. Ensure that all proposed City policies and bylaws relating to the agricultural sector and ALR encourage agricultural viability:
 - a) Refer proposed policies and bylaws to the proposed AAC (see Recommendation 1) for comment prior to their adoption;
 - b) Ensure that policies and bylaws, prior to adoption, are subject to the Agricultural Impact Assessment (see Recommendation 4) where appropriate.
12. Ensure that new City bylaws related to agriculture and the ALR are developed with regard to existing bylaws to determine whether changes in enforcement would solve the identified problems.
13. Review Zoning Bylaw 5300 in consultation with the public and prepare information, options and recommendations to improve its effectiveness in supporting agricultural viability. This review includes the following items and other actions not yet identified:
 - a) Review the current list of uses permitted in the AG1 zone and update it to reflect changes in Provincial legislation and the objectives of achieving agricultural viability;
 - b) Review the AG1 zoning regulations for residential uses on farms and for non-farm residences in the ALR to determine how to better achieve agricultural viability;
 - c) Review the non-agricultural uses currently permitted in the AG1 zone to better achieve agricultural viability;
 - d) Review how to better manage building materials, storage and other accessory farm uses;
 - e) Review the current policy on the storage of farm equipment/vehicles related to the farm operation as a principal use (the storage of farm equipment/vehicles is currently an accessory use);
 - f) Review all minimum and maximum property and building setbacks for residences in the ALR to minimize conflicts with adjacent uses.
14. Review the roadside stand regulations in Business Regulation Bylaw 7148 and prepare information, options, and recommendations to improve their effectiveness and achieve agricultural viability.
15. Review existing bylaws, regulations, guidelines and associated operational procedures to ensure that they conform to the FPPA, the Guide for Bylaw Development In Farming Areas and the Local Government Act.

16. Develop an information package for farmers about City agricultural policies and bylaws, and make this package available to the RFI and place it on the City website.
17. Encourage a cooperative and partnership approach to avoid and address nuisance complaints (e.g. spraying, noise, odour, dust, pesticide application, burning, etc.)

Non-Farm Uses and Parks and Recreation Strategy (Section 3.4)

18. It is recommended that the proposed AAC (see Recommendation 1) review the following non-farm uses of ALR land and prepare information, options and recommendations. This review includes examining the following items and other actions not yet identified:
 - a) Review the feasibility of amalgamating smaller lots to larger ones wherever possible;
 - b) Restrict the upgrading of existing roads and development of new roads unless there is a direct or net benefit to farming;
 - c) Discourage the use of fill on organic soils, except for the following agricultural purposes:
 - i) When required to ensure a solid foundation for a farm residence or other structure related to the agricultural operation;
 - ii) To provide a road base for access which benefits agriculture.
 - d) Limit recreational uses of ALR land to:
 - i) Encourage dyke and recreational trails at the perimeter of the ALR;
 - ii) Work with the agricultural community, equestrian community and recreational community to ensure that recreational uses adjacent to or within the ALR are compatible with farm uses and have a positive benefit to farming.
 - e) Ensure that a "least disruption to farmers" policy exists to protect farmers from the impacts of recreational uses by:
 - i) Requiring the proposed AIA (see Recommendation 4) be completed for new recreational uses and that appropriate steps be taken to mitigate potential conflicts;
 - ii) Ensuring that whenever potential negative impacts for agriculture may occur, that adequate compensation and/or viable alternatives are available;
 - iii) Increasing the awareness among equestrian owners about riding on or near private property and public roads and trails, and the impact which horses and riders can have on agricultural land;
 - iv) Preparing over the long term and in partnership with others, agricultural edge plans for recreational uses, dykes and perimeter trails in and adjacent to the ALR;
 - v) Ensuring that suitable facilities (e.g. toilets and garbage cans) are provided to eliminate trespassing and littering on existing recreational trails;
 - vi) Ensuring that no financial costs are incurred by farmers due to recreational trails or activities;
 - vii) Investigating the feasibility of developing an insurance policy and a 'save harmless' policy which would protect farmers from liability and property damage as a result of non-agricultural activities.

Agricultural Edge Strategy (Section 3.5)

19. Recognize the following areas for agricultural edge planning (see Figure 3):
 - a) The west and north edges of Gilmore;
 - b) The west edge of McLennan 2;
 - c) Behind the outer ring of houses in McLennan 2;
 - d) Shell Road Trail;
 - e) Behind the assembly uses on No. 5 Road;
 - f) North edge of Fraserport Industrial Lands.
20. Develop comprehensive agricultural edge plans for areas, including:
 - a) An inventory of existing and potential uses and conflicts;
 - b) A site-specific management plan with appropriate design guidelines;
 - c) A proposed AIA (see Recommendation 4);
 - d) Consultation with the ALC, BCMAFF, the proposed AAC (see Recommendation 1), and review of relevant resources such as the ALC report “Landscaped Buffer Specifications”;
 - e) Consultation with landowners on both sides of the agricultural edge;
 - f) An appropriate time-frame for implementation;
 - g) Mediation to mitigate any conflicts while an agricultural edge plan is being developed, or where buffering is not in place.
21. For new development adjacent to the ALR:
 - a) Require the preparation of an agricultural edge plan, including buffering on the urban side, at the expense of the developer;
 - b) Require the registration of restrictive covenants, where possible. The intent of the covenant would be to:
 - i) Inform prospective buyers of residential properties of the occurrence of normal farm practices on adjacent farmland (e.g. spraying, noise, odours, dust, pesticide application, burning, etc.); and
 - ii) Minimize urban-rural conflicts.
22. Direct compatible land uses (e.g. industrial) to land adjacent to the ALR in lieu of incompatible uses (e.g. residential, schools), wherever possible to avoid conflicts.
23. Provide the materials developed for the Public Education and Awareness Strategy (Recommendation 30 a) to residents along an agricultural edge to inform them about agriculture in their area.

Environmentally Sensitive Areas Strategy (Section 3.6)

24. The Agricultural Advisory Committee, farming community, City staff and other stakeholders shall work together to study, analyze, form options and strategies to address the following issues of concern around ESAs and the environment, as well as other issues that may arise that are of interest to the farming community:

- land use;
 - drainage, irrigation and ditch maintenance;
 - land clearing;
 - weed control;
 - crop loss due to wildlife and birds.
25. Ensure that the management strategies from 24) above allow for “least impact” on agricultural viability and whenever agricultural viability may be impacted, ensure that adequate compensation and/or viable alternatives are available.
26. Review City management policies and bylaws to:
- a) assess the implications for farming;
 - b) work towards consistency and compatibility (where not in conflict with other legislation) with the provisions of the Farm Practices Protection Act and the Guide to Bylaw Development in Farming Areas.
27. Consult with the Agricultural Advisory Committee and the farm community (together with the Advisory Committee on the Environment and other stakeholders) in the review of existing ESAs in the ALR to:
- a) Refine and clarify the inventory and functions of the existing ESAs;
 - b) Assess the interaction between agriculture and ESAs.
28. Provide information to all farmers related to best management practices and encourage them to adopt beneficial environmental guidelines.
29. Review the work of the Partnership Committee on Agriculture and the Environment and incorporate relevant aspects of their work into farm operations and City policies.

Public Education and Awareness Strategy (Section 3.7)

30. Institute an information program to increase public awareness and commitment for agriculture, in consultation with the agricultural community, the Agriculture Awareness Coordinator (BC Agriculture Council), Agriculture in the Classroom Foundation, and others:
- a) Develop appropriate materials to share with all residents (e.g. publications, via the City website) to provide them with information about agricultural activity in their area, including:
 - i) The type of farming in the area;
 - ii) Examples of normal farm practices they may experience;
 - iii) A copy of the BCMAFF publication “The Countryside and You”;
 - iv) A list of appropriate people to direct questions and concerns, such as the proposed SAL (see Recommendation 3), ALC, BCMAFF, AAFC, and others;
 - v) A “Country User Code” to identify appropriate behaviour in agricultural areas.
 - b) Develop an agricultural signage program.
 - i) Place signs along roads used by farm vehicles, along recreational trails, and incorporate signs into agricultural edge planning;

- ii) Ensure that signage focuses on “positive wording” as opposed to “directives”, such as the following examples:
 - In areas where farm vehicles may be travelling, “*Richmond farmers with slow moving vehicles use these roads too – support your local farm community*”;
 - Where vandalism and trespassing issues occur, “*This crop was planted by a member of your local farm community – please respect the farmer’s livelihood*”.
 - iii) Ensure that all signs are visibly similar, and incorporate the recommended “logo” or visual symbol (Recommendation 37 a).
 - c) Encourage the ALC to develop signs to indicate the location and extent of the ALR. An example may be “*You are now in the Agricultural Land Reserve. Please respect farmland*”;
 - d) Develop a brochure that celebrates the City’s agricultural tradition and history:
 - i) In plans and programs, emphasize the relationship between the City’s corporate vision statement (see Section 2.5) and how agriculture helps achieve that vision;
 - ii) Prepare an agricultural calendar that shows key agricultural events in the area, harvest times, etc.
 - e) Encourage linkages and partnerships between the agricultural community and the media to facilitate public education and awareness;
 - f) Create an agricultural business profile to provide information on agriculture as a business opportunity;
 - g) Develop an information package for farmers about agricultural policies and bylaws, heritage policies that support the preservation of buildings, lands and methods, and make this package available to the RFI and the public and place it on the City website (see Recommendation 16);
 - h) Explore the opportunities for holding a special event (e.g. Harvest Festival) or regular seasonal activity (e.g. summer weekend Farmer’s Market) to promote local produce and celebrate the City’s agricultural tradition and history.
31. Create opportunities for Council, City staff and others to tour the agricultural lands and learn about the role agriculture plays in the City. The proposed AAC (see Recommendation 1) may facilitate this activity.
32. It is recommended that the proposed AAC (see Recommendation 1) review the option of introducing a Restrictive Covenant for properties within, and adjacent to, the ALR to address issues of conflict (e.g. noise, odours) related to agricultural uses. Example: Covenant used by City of Surrey for subdivisions bordering the ALR.
33. Encourage existing farmers to continuously maintain their farm operations to prevent unsightly premises and project a positive public image for agriculture in Richmond.

Economic Growth and Diversification Strategy (Section 3.8)

34. Develop a strategy to encourage agricultural support services and social infrastructure (such as agricultural research, agricultural banking and financing, industrial technologies, agricultural marketing, specialized suppliers of agricultural materials and equipment) to locate in Richmond, in cooperation with the agricultural sector, Business Liaison and Development, BCMAFF, and others as appropriate.
35. Maximize the agricultural land available for agricultural uses:
- a) Review the feasibility of amalgamating smaller lots to larger ones wherever possible. These parcels could then be sold as farmland or leased to farmers;
 - b) Request the Province to review the policies on non-resident land ownership in BC and in other jurisdictions to determine how land owned by non-residents may be more fully farmed;
 - c) Establish guidelines for parcel sizes suitable for farming, including options for smaller parcels of 2 acres or less;
 - d) Encourage longer-term lease opportunities for farmers:
 - i) Discourage non-farm uses of the ALR land (see Recommendation 18);
 - ii) Develop a City-based Agricultural Land Registry to assist farmers to find agricultural land available for leasing.
 - e) Explore the rezoning of selected non-ALR land (currently zoned for light industrial use) to “Light Industrial/Agricultural” to provide for the inclusion of greenhouses as a use and to encourage greenhouse development on non-ALR land wherever possible;
 - f) Encourage non-ALR “multiple-use” industrial buildings that will attract partnerships such as allowing greenhouse development on the tops of some industrial buildings as a possible pilot project;
 - g) Review the costs and benefits of selling or leasing the City-owned nursery to local farmers in order to minimize City competition with the agricultural sector.
36. Encourage farmers to diversify their agricultural operations, by:
- a) Liaising with support agencies such as BCMAFF, AAFC, GVRD and the ALC to gather information and identify resources to clarify diversification opportunities (e.g. new crop production and development, value added production, etc.);
 - b) Encouraging partnerships between farmers and:
 - i) Other farmers that haven’t been historically involved with the RFI and the proposed AAC;
 - ii) Local businesses and industry, such as the hospitality sector, Chamber of Commerce, and others;
 - iii) City Departments and City agencies, such as Business Liaison and Development, Tourism Richmond, Chamber of Commerce, and others;
 - iv) Provincial and Federal ministries and agencies for projects which may make growth and diversification opportunities more easily attainable;

- v) Others to carefully locate and manage allotment gardens (community gardens) on agricultural lands.
37. Develop a “Buy Local” marketing initiative to increase demand for locally grown agricultural products, in cooperation with Business Liaison and Development, Tourism Richmond, Chamber of Commerce, the RFI, and others:
- a) Develop a “Taste of Richmond” logo or symbol, to appear on all agricultural communications and signs, and which could also be used by growers to label their products;
 - b) Institute a weekly Farmers’ Market in cooperating school yards or other City facilities to increase consumer access to locally grown agricultural products;
 - c) Support local growers by purchasing locally-grown landscape materials and food products for City use wherever possible;
 - d) Identify options to support access to farm direct markets along Steveston Highway where current traffic patterns discourage stopping at farms selling local products;
 - e) Develop a list of local agricultural products and when and where they are available, and circulate the list to local restaurants, ferries, schools and businesses to encourage linkages with Richmond agricultural producers.
38. Undertake a market study project to assist farmers to understand their local Richmond market, with respect to:
- a) Products desired by restaurants, and ethnic, specialty and niche products;
 - b) Expected quality and service features;
 - c) Expected product availability requirements.
39. Encourage new farmers to enter the agricultural sector by:
- a) Creating an agricultural business profile to provide information on agriculture as a business opportunity (see Recommendation 29 f);
 - b) Encouraging retiring farmers to apprentice new ones;
 - c) Investigating and publishing options for new farmers to obtain management skills training from local educational institutions and private trainers;
 - d) Assisting local young people to find job opportunities in agriculture wherever possible, including co-operative education opportunities with area educational institutions such as Kwantlen University College, University of British Columbia, and area secondary schools.
40. Review the costs and benefits of selling or leasing the City-owned nursery to local farmers in order to minimize City competition with the agricultural sector.

Gilmore (Section 4.2)

41. Discourage non-farm uses in the ALR land (see Recommendation 18).
42. Ensure that a "least impact" policy exists to protect farmers from the impacts of the proposed residential development in the London-Princess area:
 - a) Require a proposed AIA (see Recommendation 4) be completed and that appropriate steps be taken to mitigate potential conflicts;
 - b) Whenever potential negative impacts for agriculture may occur, ensure that adequate compensation and/or viable alternatives are available;
 - c) Place emphasis on the positive benefits to potential development initiatives for farm operations, e.g. improved drainage;
 - d) Require the development of an agricultural edge plan (see Recommendation 19), including buffering on the urban side of the edge;
 - e) Ensure that new landowners receive materials about agricultural activity in the area (see Recommendation 30).
43. Ensure that a "least impact" policy exists to protect farmers from the impacts of the proposed recreational trail along the southern boundary of Gilmore:
 - a) Require a proposed AIA (see Recommendation 4) be completed and that appropriate steps be taken to mitigate potential conflicts;
 - b) Whenever potential negative impacts for agriculture may occur, ensure that adequate compensation and/or viable alternatives are available;
 - c) Require that a recreation trail plan be prepared;
 - d) Require the development of an agricultural edge plan (see Recommendation 19), including buffering on the urban side of the edge;
 - e) Require that signs be posted along the trail to increase awareness for trail users about how their behaviors may relate to agricultural viability (see Recommendation 30).
44. Identify the specific problem areas for flooding from the urban areas and develop ways to reduce the impacts of flooding, in concert with the City's current Engineering Capital Plan process and in consultation with other appropriate City Divisions, Departments and Sections and the agricultural community.

McLennan 1 (Section 4.3)

45. Mitigate the issues (Section 4.3.2) associated with the Community Institutional District:
 - a) Review the option of rezoning any land parcels which have not been sold for assembly or other uses to restrict the development of future assembly uses in this area and return land to agricultural production;
 - b) Develop an agricultural edge plan for the area, including potential vegetative buffering behind existing churches to clearly differentiate churches on agricultural land from agricultural uses;

- c) Survey existing assembly properties to rectify any encroachment beyond the westerly 110 metres (360.9 ft.) of the property;
 - d) Continue to support incentives to encourage farming on the backlands.
46. Encourage farming in McLennan 1, with the understanding that the agricultural edge must be taken into consideration. Opportunities for farming in this node include, but are not limited to, the following:
- Tree farming;
 - Blueberries;
 - Vegetable production, e.g. potatoes, corn, cabbage;
 - Ornamental nursery;
 - Specialty vegetable crops;
 - Organic production;
 - Community or allotment gardens;
 - Hay production.
47. Maximize the agricultural land available for future agricultural uses (see Recommendation 35).

McLennan 2 (Section 4.4)

48. Ensure that McLennan 2 is considered a priority area for drainage improvements in the City’s Master Drainage Plan (see Recommendation 7).
49. Discourage non-farm uses of the ALR land (see Recommendation 18).
50. Maximize the agricultural land available in McLennan 2 for future agricultural uses (see Recommendation 35), including the possibility of replotting the land and/or limited access.
51. Blundell Road is the identified access to Fraserport Industrial Lands:
- a) Require a proposed AIA (see Recommendation 4) be completed and that appropriate steps be taken to mitigate potential conflicts;
 - b) Whenever potential negative impacts for agriculture may occur, ensure that viable alternatives are available and fully explored and that there is either:
 - no negative impacts on farming;
 - a net benefit to farming; or
 - adequate compensation.
52. Develop an agricultural edge plan (see Recommendation 19) for the Shell Road Trail, including fencing to prevent vandalism and theft and signage to increase awareness about the impacts of trail users on agricultural viability.
53. Liaise with the RCMP to increase awareness about vandalism, trespassing and theft that occurs on lands bordering Shell Road Trail and request their cooperation for policing the area.

McLennan 3 (Section 4.5)

54. Identify development options for McLennan 3 parcels which include:
- Having it totally farmed;
 - Maximizing benefits to agriculture and farming if used for non-farm land uses;
 - Consider City ownership of the land.

East Richmond 1 (Section 4.6)

55. Ensure that East Richmond 1 is considered a priority area for drainage improvements in the City's Master Drainage Plan (See Recommendation 7).
56. Ensure that any widening of Blundell Road (see Recommendation 51) results in benefits for farming and has minimal impacts on farming.
57. Ensure that a "least impact" policy exists to protect farmers from the impacts of the increased development of the Riverport and the Fraserport Industrial Lands:
- a) Require a proposed AIA (see Recommendation 4) be completed and that appropriate steps be taken to mitigate potential conflicts;
 - b) Whenever potential negative impacts for agriculture may occur, ensure that viable alternatives are available and fully explored and that there is either:
 - no negative impacts on farming;
 - a net benefit to farming; or
 - adequate compensation.
 - c) Place emphasis on positive benefits to development initiatives for farm operations, e.g. improved drainage;
 - d) Require the development of an agricultural edge plan (see Recommendation 19), including buffering on the urban side of the edge;
 - e) Review the development strategy for the Fraserport Industrial Lands to find potential linkages with the agricultural industry, and the potential for joint initiatives.

East Richmond 2 (Section 4.7)

58. Ensure that East Richmond 2 is considered a priority area for drainage improvements in the City's Master Drainage Plan (see Recommendation 7).
59. Review the proposal to widen Blundell Road (see Recommendation 51).
60. Use any further developments of the industrial areas (Fraserport Lands) as a means to implement drainage improvements.

East Richmond 3 (Section 4.8)

61. Maintain the existing drainage and infrastructure initiatives in this node.

East Richmond 4 (Section 4.9)

62. Review the use of fill on organic soils (see Recommendation 18 c).
63. Request the Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection to investigate the viability of rebuilding and upgrading the perimeter dyke around the eastern tip of Richmond along the North Arm of the Fraser River, instead of the proposed mid-island dyke.
64. Maintain the existing drainage and infrastructure initiatives in this node.

Excerpt of Minutes
Agricultural Advisory Committee
Held Wednesday, August 15, 2017 (7:00 pm)
M.2.002
Richmond City Hall

4. Agricultural Viability Strategy: AAC Preliminary Review

On June 26, 2017, City Council gave a referral to staff to review the 2003 Richmond Agricultural Viability Strategy. Staff provided a table comprised of recommendations from the Richmond Agricultural Viability Strategy (2003) to AAC members to start a discussion on what the priorities and recommended policy areas should be for the updated Strategy. A summary of the discussion is captured below:

- 1) Drainage –
 - a. Further revisions to the Master Drainage Plan may be required with flooding issues on farmland,
 - b. City should address changing needs in capacity. The capacity of No. 3 Road canal is not sufficient. AAC can advise on drainage reparations over time.
- 2) Public works – Any road works including widening (including bike lanes) and improvements, must keep surrounding farming viable
- 3) Salt Wedge – City of Richmond to fund clean water for farms affected by the migration of the salt wedge
- 4) Public Awareness -
 - a. Raise awareness on normal farm practices, conflicts between residents and farmers because of complaints of “nuisance”
 - b. Raise awareness about the feasibility of and promotion of farming on small parcels, using programs/open houses, websites
- 5) Public Education – Introduce the importance of agriculture to kids, where food comes from. The City can work with the Richmond school board to introduce programs include community gardens, work with the Ministry of Agricultural and Kwantlen Polytechnic University in rolling out activities in schools (e.g., mobile dairy farm, spuds in tubs, school kitchens and local food).
- 6) Port Lands – The Port is purchasing farmable land but City Council wants to preserve it. A strategy should be developed to prevent the Port from buying farmland, may include lobbying to higher levels of government.
- 7) Provincial Policies – Streamline City of Richmond policies with provincial policies, AAC to provide input towards provincial policies
- 8) Encourage Farming –
 - a. Strategies to increase farming on properties that are not currently farmed, including lobby provincial government to give powers to the city to tax at a higher rate if land is

not farmed. Facilitate the leasing of ALR properties that are not farmed when the property owner does not wish to lease their property through the use of an additional tax levy.

b. Strategies to facilitate farming on land-locked properties in the ALR

9) Fill Projects –

a. Metro Vancouver to report on tools to manage illegal fill on farmland

b. City of Richmond Community Bylaws has also recently introduced tools for enforcement including ticketing charges

c. Strategy needed to approve and monitor fill applications

d. Strategy to discourage dump sites

e. Fill may be used for dykes

10) Maintaining Properties – Enforcement on maintaining properties to be weed-free of noxious invasive species under the “Weed Act”

AAC members are invited to provide further input on the recommendations table for staff to consider and for further discussion by August 25, 2017.

Agriculture Hot Facts

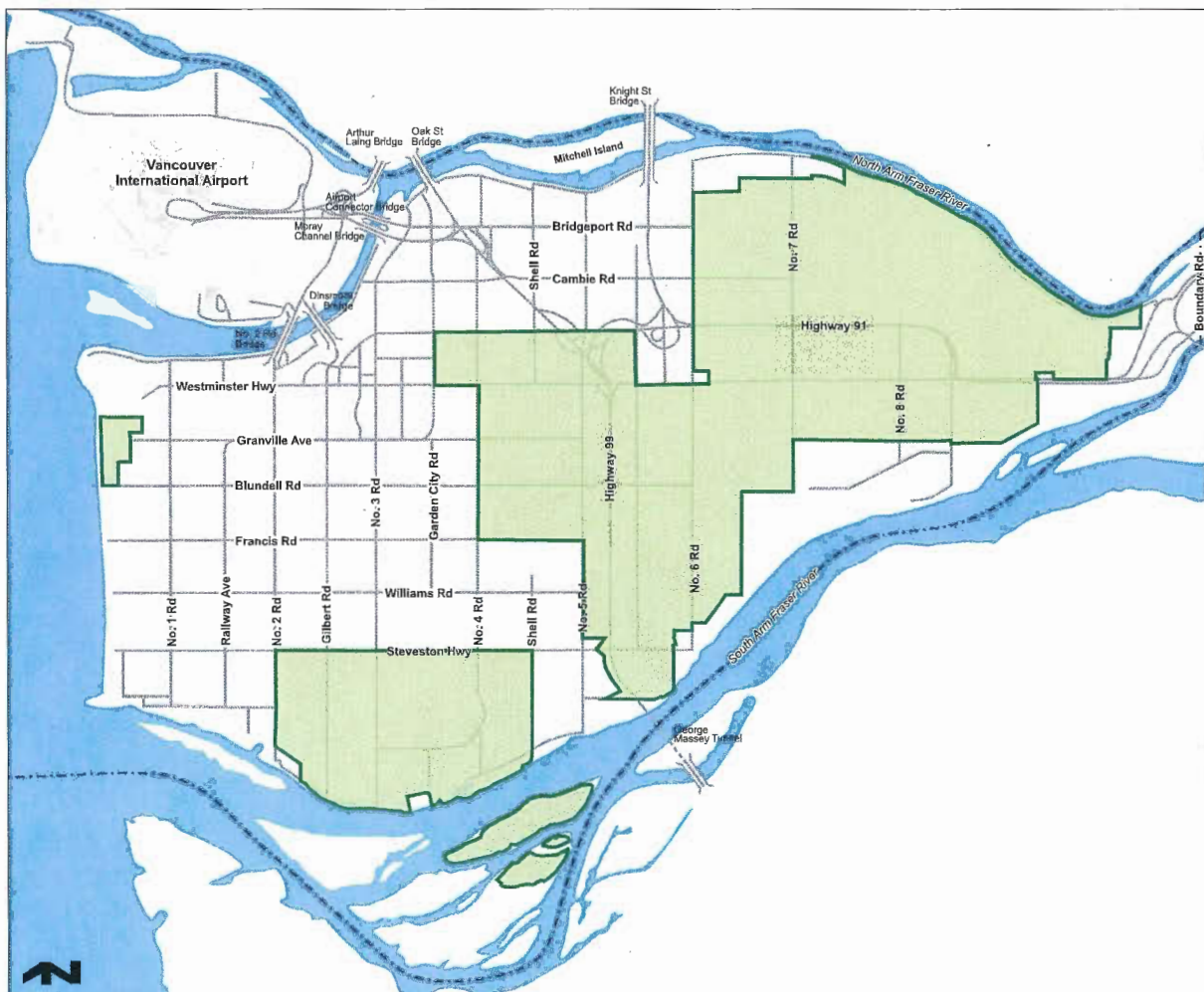
Agriculture is an important part of Richmond's history. Early settlers were attracted to Richmond by the fertile soils of Lulu and Sea Islands and promise of agricultural productivity.

Over the years, Richmond has grown and evolved into a vibrant, cosmopolitan urban centre. Despite the dramatic changes, a significant portion of Richmond's land area remains agricultural. Today, agriculture forms an important part of the local and regional economy as well as a major land use in the city.

The Agricultural Land Base

Approximately 4,993 ha (12,338 ac) of Richmond's land base, or 39% of the City, is within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) as shown in Figure 1. The total amount of area within the ALR and area zoned Agriculture outside of the ALR is approximately 5,563 ha (13,746 ac). These figures do not include ALR boundaries on Sea Island.

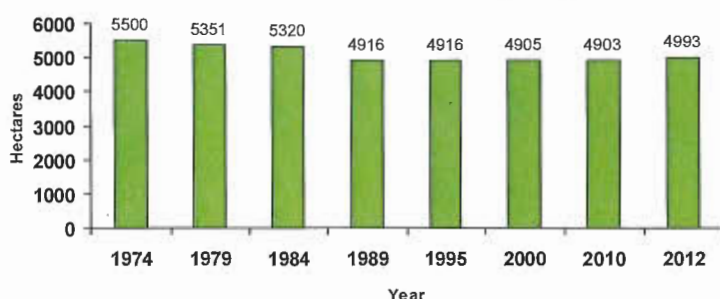
Figure 1: Richmond's Agricultural Land Reserve



Agricultural Land Reserve Boundaries

Figure 2 below shows that the amount of land in the ALR has remained relatively stable in the last 20 years. An increase in Richmond ALR land area from 2010 figures was based on a detailed mapping and data review of the ALR boundary area in Richmond completed in 2012. The increase in ALR land area is not the result of any specific applications to include land in the ALR for Richmond.

Figure 2: Total ALR Land in Richmond (in hectares)



Much of Richmond's soils are organic, formed by fluvial (river) deposits of the Fraser River. Drainage is a major issue in Richmond, where the groundwater table is high. However, with improvements (mainly drainage), all of Richmond's ALR is considered to be prime agricultural land.

Farms

According to the 2016 Census of Agriculture, approximately 3,122 ha (7,714 ac) of Richmond is farmed by 189 farms. The remaining lands in the ALR are either vacant or occupied by non-farm uses (including roads, institutional uses, golf courses, etc.).

The greatest number of farms are owned by sole proprietors (78), with family farms and partnerships also common (67 and 30, respectively).

Farmers

There were approximately 265 farm operators in Richmond in 2016. 170 farm operators were paid solely by farm work, with 95 being paid by some form of non-farm work. In regards to the number of hours which operators worked for an agricultural operation, 90 operators worked more than 40 hours a week, 65 operators worked between 20 and 40 hours a week, and 110 operators worked less than 20 hours a week.

Agricultural Production

Cranberries are the most dominant crop in Richmond, with almost 807 ha (1,995 ac) in production. In 2016, Richmond accounted for approximately 31% of BC's cranberry acreage.

Other top crops in Richmond are outlined in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Richmond's Top Crops by Land Used in their Production, 2016 Census of Agriculture

Land Used in Crop Production – Top 10 Crops				
	Hectares	% of Crops	% of Census Farms	% of ALR
Cranberries	807	35.8%	25.8%	16.2%
Blueberries	577	25.6%	18.5%	11.6%
Other hay	186	8.3%	6.0%	3.7%
Potatoes	164	7.3%	5.3%	3.3%
Sweet Corn	74	3.3%	2.4%	1.5%
Corn for silage	60	2.7%	1.9%	1.2%
Cabbage	43	1.9%	1.4%	0.9%
Oats	40	1.8%	1.3%	0.8%

Land Used in Crop Production – Top 10 Crops				
	Hectares	% of Crops	% of Census Farms	% of ALR
Pumpkins	29	1.3%	0.9%	0.6%
Chinese Cabbage	28	1.2%	0.9%	0.6%
Total	2,008	89.2%	64.3%	40.2%

Agricultural Economy

The 189 farms that reported in the 2016 Census of Agriculture recorded gross farm receipts of \$57.8 million. This is an increase from \$48.6 million of gross farm receipts reported by 211 farms in 2011, \$40.5 million of gross farm receipts reported by 172 farms in 2006, and \$37.6 million of gross farm receipts reported by 182 farms in 2001.

Towards a Viable Future

The viability of farming in Richmond faces a number of challenges, including:

- drainage;
- pressure to urbanize the ALR;
- pressure to subdivide land within the ALR;
- rural/urban conflicts;
- high land values;
- economics of farming;
- servicing and infrastructure limitations.

In 1999, after the adoption of the City's current Official Community Plan (OCP), the City embarked on a process to develop an Agricultural Viability Strategy (AVS) in order to manage the agricultural areas for long-term viability. The four-year process, which was carried out in partnership with the Richmond Farmers Institute, Agricultural Land Commission and Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, included extensive consultation with the local farming community. The results of the process are outlined below:

Agricultural Profile (2002)—The Profile is a compendium of statistics and information about the agricultural sector in Richmond. It is largely compiled from the Census of Agriculture.

Agricultural Viability Strategy (2003)—The AVS contains over 60 recommendations designed to:

- Foster and maintain agricultural viability;
- Address the key issues facing the agricultural sector in Richmond;
- Work within the framework of a 2021 vision and guiding principles for the future.

Agricultural Advisory Committee—One of the first recommendations of the AVS to be implemented was the formation of a new Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC) in 2003. The AAC, which consists of 10 citizens (7 of whom are farmers), will provide input and advice from an agricultural perspective on a range of policy issues and development proposals that affect agriculture. The AAC will also monitor and guide implementation of the AVS.

Sources:

Statistics Canada, 2001, 2006, 2011, and 2016 Census of Agriculture.

For Further Information:

The Agricultural Profile and the Agricultural Viability Strategy are both available for viewing on the City's website: www.richmond.ca

For information about the Agricultural Advisory Committee or land use policies in the ALR, please contact Ada Chan Russell, Planner 1, Policy Planning Department at 604-276-4188.

City of Richmond

6911 No. 3 Road, Richmond, BC V6Y 2C1
www.richmond.ca

**Draft Terms of Reference
City of Richmond
Agricultural Viability Strategy Update**

1. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to set out the Terms of Reference that will guide the process to update Richmond's 2003 Agricultural Viability Strategy (AVS) and Profile.

2. Background

The AVS was approved by Richmond City Council on May 26, 2003 and provides a 2021 vision, principles, objectives, and practical strategies to guide decisions regarding the future growth and viability of the agricultural industry in Richmond. The Agricultural Profile was also prepared to provide a unique ALR database to better understand and assist in making farming and ALR decisions.

The AVS is a long-term commitment and partnership of the City, and agricultural community, to strengthen and enhance agricultural viability in Richmond. The AVS identified initiatives that were to be undertaken and coordinated at the local level, to create a positive agricultural, environment, infrastructure and regulatory policy framework to support the agricultural sector.

As part of the 2041 OCP preparation, the 2003 Richmond AVS was reviewed with the AAC, to determine how it had been useful and if any changes were needed. While significant improvements have been achieved, looking out to 2021, many of the 2003 Strategy issues and challenges still require attention today, as they are complex, and involve senior government, community, private sector and farmer support.

On June 26, 2017, to continue its innovative and leadership agricultural role, Council resolved to have staff prepare these Term of Reference to update the AVS to ensure that it remains effective and an important part of the City's planning policies.

2. Objectives

The specific objectives are to:

- update the Agricultural Profile and undertake a comprehensive analysis to better understand and manage the agricultural industry and lands;
- identify current issues, trends and opportunities for agriculture through community consultation;
- ensure the AVS remains relevant to current trends, issues and challenges facing the agricultural industry, and are consistent with other relevant policies and regulations;
- strengthen and develop policies and recommendations that will guide future decisions related to agriculture and protect agricultural lands;
- identify priority strategies to be implemented in the next five years;
- recommend incentives that will ensure long term viability of agricultural industry and economic growth of the sector and put underutilized agricultural lands into production;
- recommend innovative and proactive approaches to create a strong partnership, recognize agriculture as an important contributor to the local landscape, culture, and economy and raise public awareness of farm needs, issues and practices; and
- develop a detailed implementation plan to put strategies into actions.

3. Scope of Work

The update will include:

- update the Agricultural Profile through data collection, surveys and interviews;
- review the current AVS vision, principles and see if they reflect the current needs of the agricultural industry;
- review relevant City, regional and provincial policies (e.g., ALC Policies, Metro Vancouver Regional Growth Strategy), to ensure the recommendations in the AVS are consistent with them;
- review other municipalities' approaches and success stories to see if they can be applied to Richmond;
- review the current AVS and identify completed actions that could be removed or amended and any outdated references and/or recommendations, and recommendations that need to be strengthened and completed;
- conduct a comprehensive public consultation to identify the current and anticipated future issues concerning agriculture in Richmond;
- identify key topic areas and develop policies and recommendations;
- identify potential partnership; and
- provide a detailed implementation plan that include priorities, short, medium and long term and ongoing action items.

The update will address a range of issues including the issues noted below. The issues that are already addressed in the AVS will need to be further explored, updated and/or strengthened as required:

AAC's Role

- Continue to emphasize that the AAC's role is advisory

Climate Change

- Assessing impacts of climate change and sea-level rise on agriculture

Agricultural Decision Making Strategy

- Introducing an Agricultural Impact Assessment process

Infrastructure (e.g., water, drainage, dyking) Concerns

- Improving drainage system, which may include revisions to the City's Master Drainage Plan
- Assessing impacts of the Fraser River 'salt wedge' on farmland and review possible improvements that would supply salt-free irrigation water to affected areas

Roads and Access

- Assessing impacts from any road improvements, including road widening and bike lanes, on farmland
- Assessing the problems and threats to farming, if currently unopened ALR roads are open up

Small Farms

- Exploring how to encourage farming on the many small farm parcels including how to provide proper road access to inaccessible parcels

City Policies and Bylaws Strategy

- Assessing consistency of City policies and regulations with provincial agriculture policies
- Managing soil deposit applications and approvals

Non-farm Uses and Parks and Recreation Strategy

- Managing City parkland and recreational trails to ensure there is minimal conflict

Agriculture with respect to the Environment and Environmentally Sensitive Area

- Managing properties that are designated Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA), or are regulated by the Provincial Riparian Area Regulations (RAR) to find a balance between farming opportunities and environmental management

- Continuing enforcement of removing noxious invasive species

Agricultural Edge Strategy

- Assessing impacts on farming from adjacent non-farm development
- Assess any impacts of industrial uses, in particular of the Port of Vancouver's past and possible future expansion on nearby ALR land;
- Enhancing edge planning and prepare neighbourhood-specific landscape buffer guidelines

Public Education and Awareness Strategy

- Raising public awareness and education to promote farming and farming activities

Economic Growth and Diversification Strategy

- Providing incentives (e.g., tax rebates to encourage farming on land that is not currently farmed)
- Encouraging property owners who do not farm to lease their land for farming purposes
- Encouraging farming of small parcels in the ALR by exploring community-focused, innovative options
- Undertaking food tourism initiatives to celebrate and promote agricultural heritage and assets
- Advancing development and application of agricultural innovations
- Studying productivity potential of Richmond farmland
- Studying productivity potential in direct market agriculture
- Facilitating land availability for next generation farmers
- Encouraging organic farming
- Researching increased demand for non-soil based farming (e.g., hydroponics, vertical farming) and assess trends and impacts on the use of agricultural lands
- Helping new farmers to find suitable lands and connect new and retiring farmers (e.g., landmatching programs)
- Encouraging urban agriculture and strengthening the local food system; and
Other issues as necessary.

4. Process and Timelines

The proposed work program schedule includes the following two Phases.

- Phase 1 - Consultation includes researching and updating the Agriculture Profile, consulting with key agricultural stakeholders including the federal Ministry of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, BC Ministry of Agriculture, BC Agricultural Land Commission, Metro Vancouver, other municipalities, No. 5 Road Backland institutions, the agricultural community, food security groups, ALR land owners and urban residents and business.
 - Consultation methods will include City online surveys, public open houses and meetings with external stakeholders; and
 - The purpose of these consultations is to identify any further topics and solutions.
- Phase 2 - Finalizing the RAVS Update involves:
 - Staff bringing a report to Planning Committee containing a draft AVS and a recommended consultation program; and
 - Subsequently, staff bringing a report to Planning Committee to consider and, if acceptable, approve the updated Richmond Agricultural Viability Strategy which will include a five year implementation program.

Staff will provide Council with periodic updates of progress and any changes to the approved Terms of Reference (e.g., by memos, verbal update at Planning Committee, reports), as necessary.

5. Consultation

The AVS update will involve a comprehensive consultation program with the agricultural community, key stakeholders, internal and external agencies, residents in the ALR, and the general public, to identify current issues, opportunities, practical and innovative recommendations and a five year implementation plan. The following engagement activities will be conducted: open houses, interviews, meetings and workshops with a wide range of agricultural stakeholder groups, and agricultural and urban residents.

The City's Agricultural Advisory Committee will assist in engaging and consulting the agricultural community and reviewing and providing feedback on draft reports as required.

6. Deliverables

- An updated Agricultural Profile including a summary report;
- AN updated 2041 AVS including an executive summary and a detailed five year implementation plan.

Prepared by the Policy Planning Department, City of Richmond