



## DISTRICT OF METCHOSIN

**\*\*REVISED AGENDA\*\***

### AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY SELECT COMMITTEE MEETING

**Tuesday May 5, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.**

**MOVED TO 7:00 p.m.**

Council Chambers

Metchosin Municipal Hall

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1. **Agenda, Additions, Approval**
2. **Presentations**
  - a) Shawn Dirksen, Northstar Organics
3. **Public Participation**
4. **Adoption of Minutes**
  - a) Agricultural Advisory Select Committee, March 17, 2026 ..... 1
5. **Receipt of Minutes**
  - a) Peninsula and Area Agricultural Commission, March 12, 2026 ..... 5
6. **Business Arising from the Minutes**
  - a) Speakers Series Event Update
  - b) Agricultural Plan, Priority Action Items and Funding Needs
7. **Reports**
  - a) Chair Update (Verbal)
  - b) Councillor Liaison Update (Verbal)
  - c) Metchosin Agricultural Alliance Update (Verbal)
8. **Correspondence**
  - a) BC AAC Workshop on February 4 [2026\\_aac\\_workshop\\_proceedings.pdf](#) ..... 11
9. **Other Business**
  - a) Metchosin Day
10. **Adjournment and Next Meeting Date**



District of Metchosin

Minutes

**Agricultural Advisory Select Committee Meeting**

**Tuesday, March 17 2026, at 7:00 P.M.**

Council Chamber

Metchosin Municipal Hall

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**Present:** Peter Chettleburgh, Alex Fletcher, Brent Donaldson, Shelly Donaldson, Robin Tunnicliffe, Sasha Kubicek, Andrew Penn, Judy Carter

**Regrets:** Matt

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m.  
The Committee welcomed new member Judy Carter.

**1. Agenda, Additions and Approval**

**Moved and Seconded** by Peter Chettleburgh, and Sasha Kubicek  
THAT the Committee approve the agenda as presented.

**Carried**

**2. Presentations:**

- None

**3. Public Participation**

- None

**4. Adoption of Minutes**

**Moved and Seconded** by Brent Donaldson and Peter Chettleburgh  
THAT the Committee approve the minutes of the Agricultural Advisory Select Committee meeting held on January 15, 2026.

**Carried**

**5. Business Arising from the Minutes**

**a) Amendments to Terms of Reference**

**Moved and Seconded**

THAT the Committee recommend Council approve the following amendment to the Agricultural Advisory Select Committee's Terms of Reference:

To strike the word 'developing' and replace with 'implementing' under the Purpose of the Committee as long as the wording before says "assist Metchosin Council in".

**Carried**

**b) Event Subcommittee, Banner and Outreach Materials, Update**

- Deadline to finalize for the March 31<sup>st</sup> Agri Tourism event.
- Wording approved for the banner to be- Agriculture Advisory Select Committee "Supporting

- Metchosin Farming".
- Include the District of Metchosin Logo
- Brent Donaldson and Alex Fletcher volunteered to complete a draft design and by Friday, March 20, for committee approval.
- Final design to be completed by March 23.

**c) Agricultural Plan, Priority Action Items and Funding Needs**

- Committee recommendations to Metchosin Agricultural Alliance (MAA):
  - Apply for a Local Line online store to have an impactful first deliverable with four anchor products:
    - Farms initially interested are Umi Nami Farm, Perry Bay Sheep/Still Meadow Farm, Wind Whipped Farm and Sea Bluff Farm;
    - Other farms to use the portal as they have product available.
  - Next step is for MAA to apply to the BC Association of Farmers Markets to access their services like online registration staff funding and eligibility to accept BC Nutrition Coupons.

**Committee Discussion:**

- Revenue options for Metchosin farmers;
- CRD use of Local Line;
- Presentation by Moss Street Market administrator Kyle Goulet on Local Line use;
  - Chair will reach out to the above.
- District funding possibilities for Plan implementation; and
- Local farmer attendance at Committee meetings.

**6. Reports**

**a) Chair Report**

- Planning update for the Agri Tourism workshop being held at Bilston Creek Farm on March 31:
  - Muse article, SIFI (South Island Farmers Institute) collaboration, marketing and planning.
- Tribute to J. Nicols, one of the current owners and landlords of Metchosin's abattoir.

**b) Councilor Liaison Update**

- Council endorsement of AVICC Resolution on CSA program subsidy from province;
- Kitchen tour update; and
- Attendance at March PAAC meeting.
  - PAAC meeting minutes to be shared by Council Liaison.

**7. Correspondence**

- None

**8. Other Business**

**a) Agritourism Forum**

- Andrew Penn and Chair to confirm presenter; and
- Councillor Donaldson, on behalf of District, to invite local First Nations to event.
- Event details:
  - March 31<sup>st</sup> at Bilston Creek Farm from 2pm to 5pm,
  - 2pm-2:30pm: Social,

- 2:30-3pm: Discussion: Premiers Task Force tax changes, - MAA and Geese update.
- 3pm-4pm: Karma and Rebecca Agri Tourism presentation
- 4pm-5pm: Discussions, brainstorming, questions, refreshments and pizza
  - Detailed event plan with tasks and responsibilities will be sent out separately by Sasha Kubicek

**b) Metchosin Agricultural Alliance (MAA) update**

- Alex, Peter and Robin presented to Council;
- Creating membership structure, looking at individual farmers as members;
- Have reached out to Salt Spring Island Agricultural Alliance;
- Working closely with Metchosin Foundation;
- Local Line online store and BC Association of Farmers Market membership will be initial focus.

**c) Regional Goose Working Committee update**

- Guardians Of Our Salish Estuaries presented to the RGWC:
  - Key organization on island contracted and approved to do egg addling, estuary restoration and coordination of First Nation mult season harvests. One is scheduled for Metchosin this year.
  - Education gap within Metchosin community- Possibility for committee to assist CRD by providing more education.
    - Sasha Kubicek to have a booth for geese education at upcoming Agri Tourism Forum.

**d) 2025 Annual Report**

- Chair will provide staff with summary; and
- Councilor Donaldson will provide MPA and Community Garden summaries.

**9. Adjournment and Next Meeting Date**

**Moved and Seconded** by Alex Fletcher and Sasha Kubicek  
 THAT the Committee adjourn the meeting at 8:55 p.m.

**Carried**

The next meeting will be held on May 5th, 2026, at 7:00 p.m.





**THE CORPORATION OF THE DISTRICT OF CENTRAL SAANICH**  
**Minutes of the Peninsula and Area Agricultural Commission**

**March 12, 2026, 7:00 p.m.**

**FH1 Boardroom**

**1512 Keating Cross Road**

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**Present:** Mike Doehnel (Chair), Katie Underwood (Vice-Chair), Paul Bains, Emily Harris, Larry Sluggett, Diane Williamson, Councillor Donaldson (Metchosin), Councillor Thompson (Central Saanich)

**Absent:** Jeni Michell, Councillor De Vries (Saanich), Councillor Stock (North Saanich)

**Government Representatives Present:** Noah Brotman, CRD (Farmlands Trust); Megan Halstead, Ministry of Agriculture & Food; Samantha Hammond, CRD (Geese)

**Staff Present:** Emilie Gorman, Director of Corporate Services/Corporate Officer (Central Saanich); Kerri Clark, Manager of Planning (Central Saanich); Molly Rose, Planner (Saanich)

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

**2. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

The Chair respectfully acknowledged that the land on which we gather is the traditional territory of the WSÁNEĆ people which includes WJOLEŁP (Tsartlip) and SXÁUTW (Tsawout) First Nations.

**3. ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

3.1 Agenda of the March 12, 2026 Peninsula and Area Agricultural Commission Meeting

MOVED AND SECONDED

*That the agenda of the March 12, 2026 Peninsula and Area Agricultural Commission meeting be approved as circulated.*

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

#### 4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

##### 4.1 Minutes of the February 3, 2026 Peninsula and Area Agricultural Commission Meeting MOVED AND SECONDED

*That the minutes of the February 3, 2026 Peninsula and Area Agricultural Commission meeting be adopted as circulated.*

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

#### 5. REPORTS

##### 5.1 Chair's Report

The Chair provided an update on recent agricultural and food-security–related engagement within the community, including:

- CRD Environment Committee: Eight local farmers presented concerns regarding geese impacts on agricultural lands. Commissioners were encouraged to review the meeting.
- Central Saanich Farmers Meeting: Attendance included speakers from the CRD, the Ministry of Agriculture, municipal staff, and community members. Topics discussed included water availability, drainage challenges, geese management, and regulations related to on-farm food processing and consumption.
- North Saanich Agriculture & Food Security Advisory Committee: The Chair attended as a public observer and noted significant discussion regarding the complexity and ambiguity of ALC regulations; inconsistencies in local Terms of Reference for Agricultural Advisory Committees; and concerns about committee roles, timing, and the effectiveness of input to local governments.

The Chair encouraged members bring forward action items for consideration under New Business, with the goal of identifying focused priorities for the coming year.

The Chair advised that territorial acknowledgements will now be provided by different Commissioners on a rotating basis to encourage meaningful and personal reflection.

##### 5.2 Treasurer's Report

The District of Central Saanich's Corporate Officer provided an update of the four municipality's draft budgets and responded to questions from the Committee. The Budgets are for administration and educational events, with the following numbers:

- District of Central Saanich: \$6,000
- District of North Saanich: \$5,500 (current year) and \$2,600 (remaining from previous year)
- District of Metchosin: \$2,000
- District of Saanich: \$2,000 (for educational events, funding has been confirmed for administration)

5.3 Appointment (Recruitment) Update - District of Metchosin (Verbal)

The District of Metchosin's Council Liaison, Councillor Donaldson, provided a verbal update on their continued work to seek appointments to the Committee.

5.4 Ministry of Agriculture and Food - AAC Event (Verbal)

The District of Central Saanich's Council Liaison, Councillor Thompson, and the Chair provided an update on the AAC Event, including:

- Agricultural tourism accommodation;
- Equestrian concerns;
- How local Council's should take a definitive stand;
- Dumping rules in Central Saanich;
- Changes for applications; and
- The need for clearer, more prescriptive ALC regulations to reduce interpretive ambiguity and improve consistency in application assessments.

5.5 Capital Regional District - Goose Update (Verbal)

The CRD representative, Ms. Hammond, provided a verbal update including:

- Update on a 2025 goose management survey;
- Regional addling;
- Partnerships with two First Nations;
- 2026 harvests that are planned for Sooke and Metchosin; and
- The CRD's Environmental Services Committee presented to the Board on February 18, 2026 who approved to extend financing and resourcing.

The Committee discussed writing senior government to request more support through a sub committee with the PAAC Chair as representative.

5.6 Central Saanich Agricultural Breakfast (Verbal)

The Chair provided a summary of the event. The Committee discussed their interest in the integrated stormwater management plan and Wallace Drive farm-land future plans and its connections to the previously ALC approved subdivision at 7210 Wallace Drive, including associated conditions. References to overall area planning considerations, adjacent First Nations lands drainage issues, and potential effects on surrounding agricultural lands and the Saanich Inlet.

## 6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

6.1 Referrals from the District of Central Saanich

6.1.1 8165 Derrinberg Road – Temporary Use Permit

The District of Central Saanich's Manager of Planning provided an introduction of the application.

The Committee discussed the following:

- How enforcement of trailers on farms is based on complaints received by the Bylaw Officer.
- Emergency services the building permit does not apply.

MOVED AND SECONDED

*That the Peninsula and Area Agricultural Commission does not support the Temporary Use Permit application for 8165 Derrinberg Road as it does not adhere to Central Saanich's bylaws for farming.*

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

MOVED AND SECONDED

*The Peninsula and Area Agricultural Commission requests that the Central Saanich Council look into the wording of the bylaw for Temporary Use permits for farms and what constitutes farm accommodations, to not include trailers and RVs that do not meet standards of buildings.*

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

## 6.2 Referrals from the District of Saanich

### 6.2.1 4313 Blenkinsop Rd - REZ00802

The applicants provided an introduction of the application.

The Committee discussed the following:

- Keeping buildings together to reduce fragmentation.
- The new zone for the site.
- The type of septic treatment.
- Recent examples in Central Saanich.

MOVED AND SECONDED

*That the Peninsula and Area Agricultural Commission has no position on the application for 4313 Blenkinsop Road - REZ00802.*

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

## 7. **MOTIONS AND NEW BUSINESS**

### 7.1 Referrals from the District of Saanich

#### 7.1.1 0 Watkiss Way - ALR00047

The District of Saanich's Planner provided an introduction of the application. The Commission discussed that the original Hospital site was also taken out of the in the ALR in View Royal while the remaining portion still in the ALR is in Saanich.

**MOVED AND SECONDED**

*That the Peninsula and Area Agricultural Commission does not generally support the exclusion of any land in the ALR including the property located at 0 Watkiss Way from the ALR, however if the application proceeds:*

1. *Supports the application providing an agricultural amenity contribution to the municipality of Saanich which would in turn forward the funds towards agricultural be received for \$100,000 for each of the GOOSE and SIFI organizations. That Saanich consider asking the applicant to:*
  - a. *explore other opportunities for parking within the existing property, such as the area west of the arrival to ER; or*
  - b. *vertical parking options to offset amount of land covered by asphalt/concrete; or*
  - c. *addition of an alternative parcel into the ALR in lieu; or*
  - d. *including a rehabilitation/"therapeutic garden" in the agricultural portion of the property.*

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**8. ADJOURNMENT**

On motion, the meeting adjourned at 8:32 p.m.

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Chair





## 2026 Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC) Workshop

*Via Zoom (see details below)*

### Participant Agenda – Tuesday, February 24, 2026

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- 8:45am**      **Zoom** online meeting – log on open for participants
- 9:00am**      **Welcome** - Ministry of Agriculture and Food
- 9:05am**      **Opening Remarks** – Ministry of Agriculture and Food
- 9:15am**      **Presentation 1 – Structures in the Agricultural Land Reserve and Applications Overview** – ALC staff
- 10:00am**     **Presentation 2 – Regulating the Movement of Soil and Fill** – Tools and Strategies – Mike Morin, Soil Bylaw Officer, City of Richmond
- 10:30am**     **Break**
- 10:45am**     **Presentation 3 – Why Subdivision is Agriculture’s Ultimate Nemesis** – Reed Bailey, Land Use Planner, Ministry of Agriculture and Food
- 11:15am**     **Breakout Session – Farm Tax Classification Review**  
Small group round table discussions to explore the current state of farm tax classification in BC and where to go from here
- 12:00pm**     **OPTIONAL – Presentation 4 - AAC 101** (For new/prospective members or those who want a refresher)  
An overview of roles, responsibilities, legislation, and best practices
- 12:30pm**     **Adjourn**



**2026 Province Wide AAC Workshop  
February 26, 2026  
Summary of Proceedings**

**Welcome**

Jeff Weightman, with the Ministry of Agriculture and Food (Ministry) greeted the group to start the Workshop. Jeff provided a territorial acknowledgement, spoke to his previous experience with Agricultural Advisory Committees (AACs), and hosted the Workshop for the morning.

**Introductory Remarks – Ministry of Agriculture and Food**

Willow Minaker, Assistant Deputy Minister, Industry Competitiveness Division, emphasized the ongoing use of a virtual workshop format while acknowledging the value of in-person engagement and the importance of participant feedback to shape future sessions. She underscored the critical role Agricultural Advisory Committees (AACs) play in supporting agriculture across British Columbia by integrating agricultural expertise into local government land use planning and decision-making. Drawing on firsthand experience from regional agrologists, her remarks highlighted how AACs provide practical, timely, and evidence-based advice that helps balance development pressures, protect farmland, and align local policies with provincial agricultural objectives. AACs are also recognized as essential forums for collaboration and dialogue among planners, farmers, and community members, particularly as agriculture faces growing challenges and opportunities.

**Structures and Applications in the Agricultural Land Reserve - Agricultural Land Commission Presentation**

Jenny Huynh, Soil Resource Supervisor and Alex Haalboom, Regional Planner from the Agricultural Land Commission provided an overview of how structures and fill placement are regulated within British Columbia's Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) under the Agricultural Land Commission Act and focused on the role of local governments and Agricultural Advisory Committees (AACs). They explained the ALC's mandate to preserve agricultural land and prioritize farming, and how land use decisions flow through a layered legislative framework from provincial legislation to local zoning. They outlined the three pathways for uses in the ALR—permitted uses, Notices of Intent (NOIs), and ALC applications—and clarified when structures and associated fill require authorization, emphasizing thresholds such as the 1,000 m<sup>2</sup> fill area. The presentation further distinguished between farm structures, accessory residential structures, principal residences, and additional residences, providing guidance on necessity, design, siting, and



total floor area calculations. The application process was summarized, highlighting where AACs provide advice and how local governments can shape outcomes before applications reach the ALC.

## **Regulating the Movement of Soil and Fill Presentation**

Mike Morin, Soil Bylaw Officer for the City of Richmond explained why local governments regulate the movement and placement of soil and other materials, highlighting the environmental, agricultural, infrastructure, and liability risks associated with unmanaged fill. Using the City of Richmond as an example, it outlined the role of a Soil Bylaw Officer, including permitting, monitoring, enforcement, and compliance, with an emphasis on voluntary compliance supported by fines and legal tools when necessary. The presentation also described the soil deposit and removal application process, the many stakeholders involved—such as AACs, council, and the ALC—and the practical challenges of enforcement, staffing, and monitoring. Overall, it emphasized the importance of clear bylaws, defined objectives, and collaboration to protect farmland, communities, and public interests.

## **The Impact of Subdivision in the Agricultural Land Reserve**

Reed Bailey, Land Use Planner for the Ministry of Agriculture and Food explained how subdivision within the Agricultural Land Reserve is one of the greatest long-term threats to agriculture, as it fragments farmland, raises land costs, increases land-use conflict, and results in smaller parcels that are far less likely to be actively farmed. Drawing on provincial and Vancouver Island data, it showed that a large proportion of ALR parcels are already very small and that subdivision accelerates the loss of agricultural viability, often serving as a substitute for farm succession rather than supporting it. The presentation highlighted research demonstrating that many subdivided parcels quickly leave farm use or change ownership, while most subdivision applications are assessed as not beneficial to agriculture yet still consume significant administrative resources. It encourages local governments and AACs to critically assess subdivision proposals and promote alternative tools such as land matching and succession planning to support farm continuity without undermining the agricultural land base.

## **Farm Tax Classification Review**

Tina Bodnar, Director Policy for Ministry of Agriculture and Food, provided an overview of British Columbia's ongoing Farm Classification Review, examining whether the current Farm Class framework—particularly the low income threshold—continues to effectively



support economically viable farming. She highlighted how the income-based approach introduced in the 1970s has contributed to a growth in small, low-productivity farms, regional concentration near urban centres, and concerns about speculation and misuse of farm tax benefits. The presentation drew on historical trends, jurisdictional comparisons across Canada, and recent data on farm incomes and qualifying agricultural uses. The presentation concluded that the regulation has not been updated in decades and identified key challenges and policy questions around thresholds, definitions of farming, regional differences, and how Farm Class could evolve to better align with modern agricultural objectives.

### **Wrap-Up and Closing Remarks**

Jeff Weightman thanked everyone for attending. He also spoke to the potential for further engagement with local government Council and Boards and invited participants to reach out to the Ministry if they have any questions.

### **AAC 101- Information on the creation, and upkeep of an Agricultural Advisory Committee**

Jeff Weightman, Team Lead for Land Use Planning for the Ministry of Agriculture and food provided an overview of Agricultural Advisory Committees (AACs) in British Columbia, explaining what they are, how they are established, and the value they bring to local government decision-making. He outlined AACs' advisory role to councils and regional boards, their mix of reactive duties (such as reviewing ALR applications and rezoning proposals) and proactive work (including agricultural area planning and policy development), and the importance of clear Terms of Reference. The presentation highlighted best practices for effective AACs, including strong relationships with elected officials, meaningful engagement with the broader farm community, appropriate committee composition, and well-managed, open meetings. Overall, it emphasized that AACs serve as a key voice for agriculture in local government, with mutual respect between AACs and councils being essential to their success.

### **ADJOURN**



## 2026 List of Attendees

Seneca Antony	
Patricia Ross	Abbotsford
Amy Needham	Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District
<b>Noah Brotman</b>	Capital Regional District
Mike Doehnel	Capital Regional District
Iain Lawrence	Capital Regional District
Randy Meye	Central Kootenay
David Mutch	Central Kootenay
Larry Rast	Central Kootenay
Dean Eastman	Central Kootenay
Dale McNamer	Central Kootenay
Owen Edwards	Central Kootenay
Christine Culham	Central Saanich
Jarret Matanowitch	Central Saanich
Bob Thompson	Central Saanich
Glen White	Chilliwack
Erin Leary	Chilliwack
Jenna Campbell	Clearwater
Howie Choy	Coldstream
Aida Mashari	Comox Valley Regional District
Paul Gurr	Comox Valley Regional District
Haley Argen	Comox Valley Regional District
Jamai Schile	Courtenay
Geoff Garbutt	Courtenay
Nancy Gothard	Courtenay
Harvy S. Takhar	Delta
Celeste Barlow Delta	Delta
Nancy Chong	Delta
Alicia Guichon	Delta
<b>Kenna Jonkman</b>	Fraser-Fort George
Graham Daneluz,	FVRD
Jennifer Kinneman	FVRD
Katelyn Hipwell	FVRD
Iain Lawrence	Juan de Fuca EA
Angela Petrie	Juan de Fuca EA
Barbara Hall	Kelowna
Domenic Rampone	Kelowna



Starla Weigel	Lake Country
George Robinson	Lantzville
David Purcell-Chung	Maple Ridge
Krishna Shah	Merritt
Carla Stewart	Metro Vancouver
Nancy Ross	Metro Vancouver
Rasika Acharya	Mission
Wayne Robinson	Nakusp
Wendy Hunt	New Hazelton
Sanjiv Shrivastava	North Saanich
Angus Todd	North Saanich
Peter Chandler	North Saanich
Radha Adhikari	Northern Rockies RM
Travis Hopcott	Pitt Meadows
Laura Roddan	qathet
Julia Dykstra	qathet
Sadie Chezenko	RD Central Kootenay
Jim Welsh	RD East Kootenay
Laura Frank	RDNO
Danielle Patterson	Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako
Megan D'Arcy	Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako
Mark McMullen	Regional District of Nanaimo
Jessica Stanley	Regional District of Nanaimo
Mark Koch	Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen
Fiona Titley	Saanich
Molly Rose	Saanich
David Gonella	Salmon Arm
James Hanna	Salmon Arm
Kristina Bell	SLRD
Carrie Charron	SLRD
Lyndsay Grey	Spallumcheen
Robyn Nitychoruk	Squamish
Aja Philp	Squamish
Vivian Birch-Jones	Squamish Lillooet Regional District
Julie McGuire	Summerland
Tyler Chick	Summerland
Lozelle Reed	Summerland
Shannon Tooley	Summerland



Jamie Unwin	Sunshine Coast Regional District
John Greenall	Thompson-Nicola Regional District
Laila Salm	Thompson-Nicola Regional District
Linda Piroddi	Thompson-Nicola Regional District
Alex Krause	Thompson-Nicola Regional District
Eric Woodward	Township of Langley
Johanna Walker	Township of Langley
Melissa Gunn	Township of Langley
Christina Gemino	Township of Langley
Scott Janzen	Township of Langley
Andy Hamer	Township of Langley
Amanda Smith	Township of Langley
John Caldarella	Township of Langley
Rayburn Ross	Township of Langley
Sally Downes	West Kelowna
April Pearson	West Kelowna
Hillary	
Sheppard	
NORTHERN	
ROCKIES REGIONAL	
MUNICIPALITY	
Doug Wood	
Karen Alexander	
Christine Terpsma	
Terry Ludwig	
Bree Eagle	Salt Spring Island
Chris Osborne	North Cowichan
Cory May	Richmond
Isbah Mahmood	Richmond
Brad Smith	Island Trust
<b>Fred Boyko</b>	Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District
Pat Harrison	
Kayla Harris	Regional District of Nanaimo
Dan McDonald	Metchosin

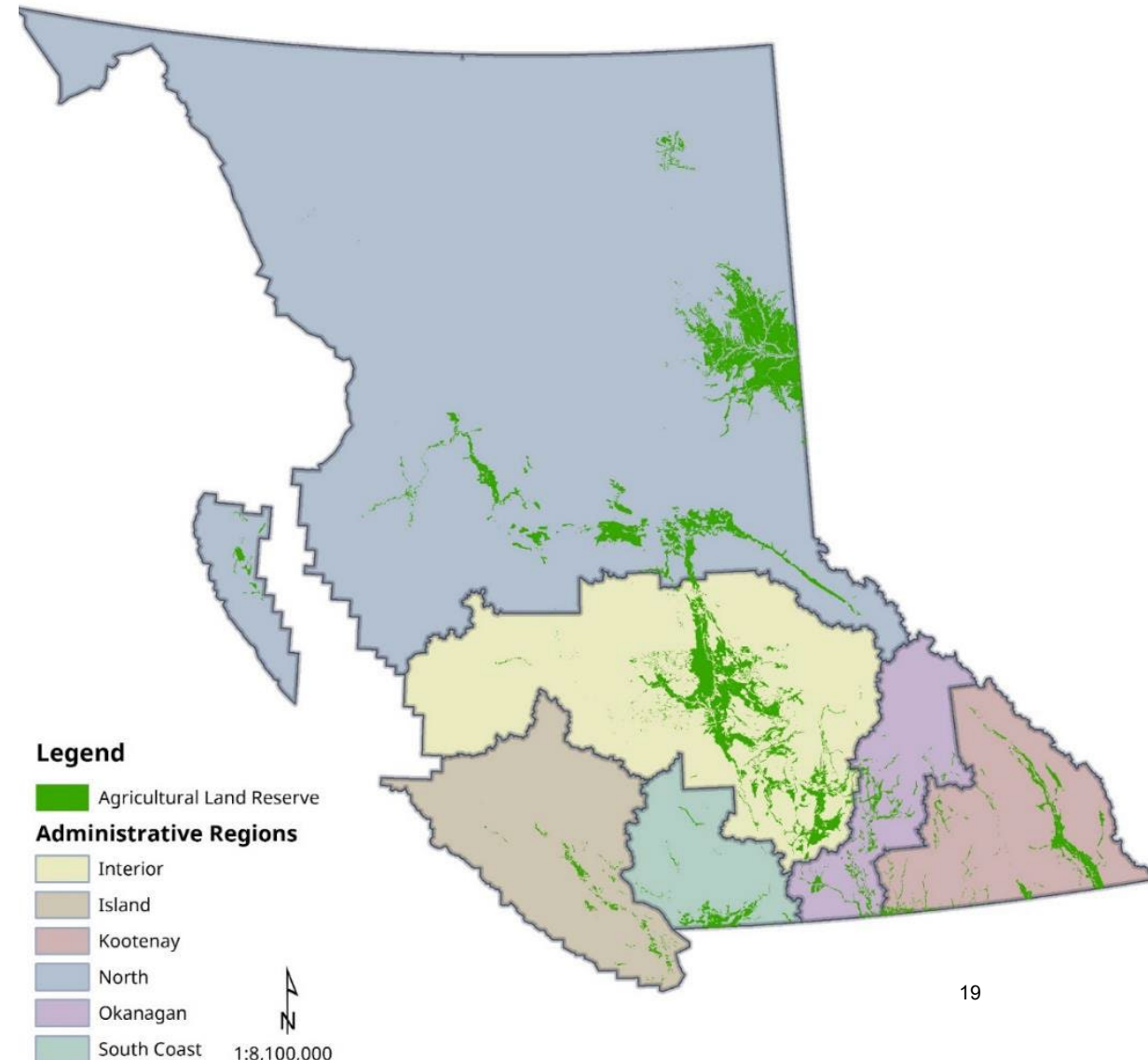
# ALC and the ALR

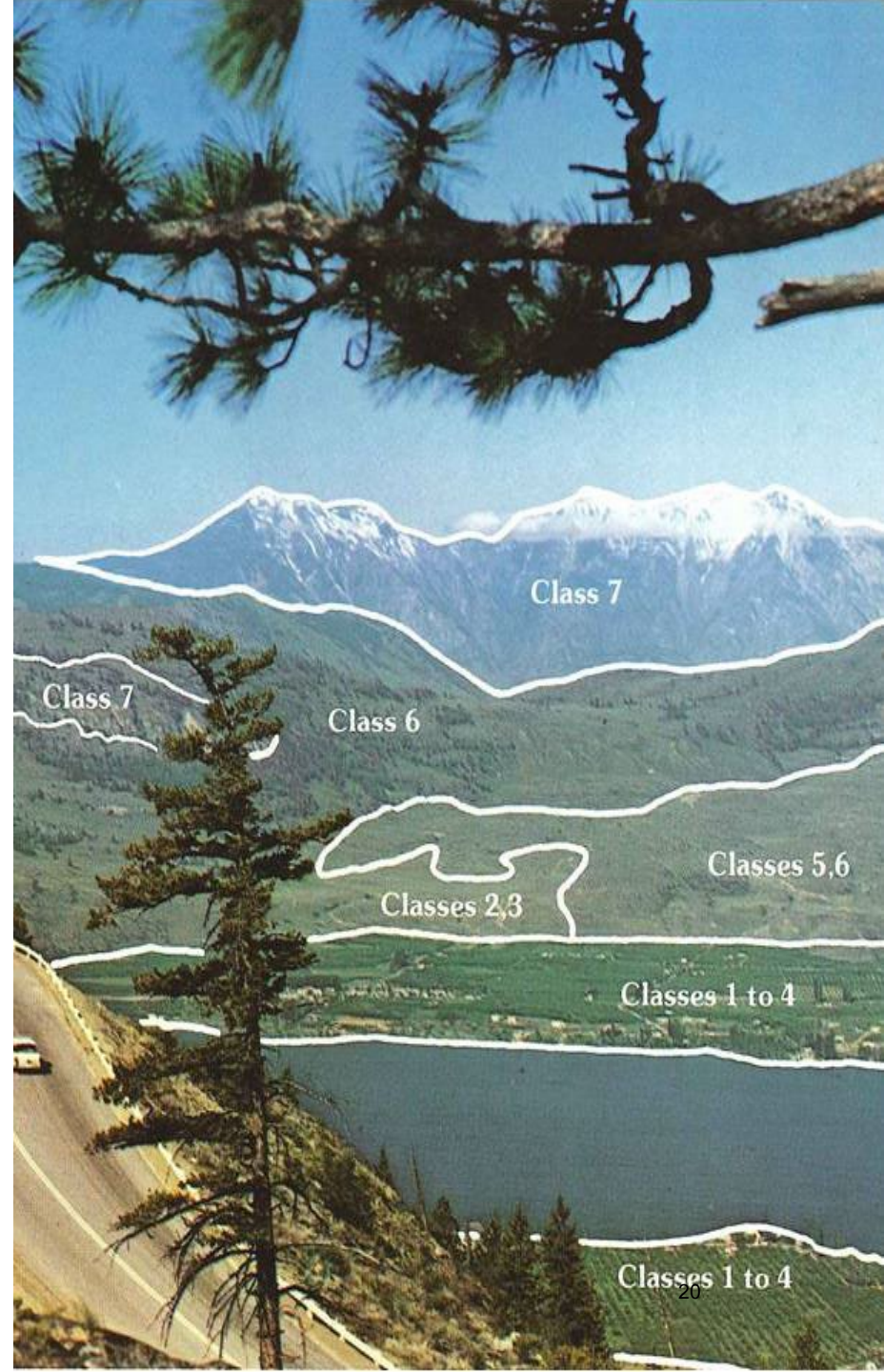
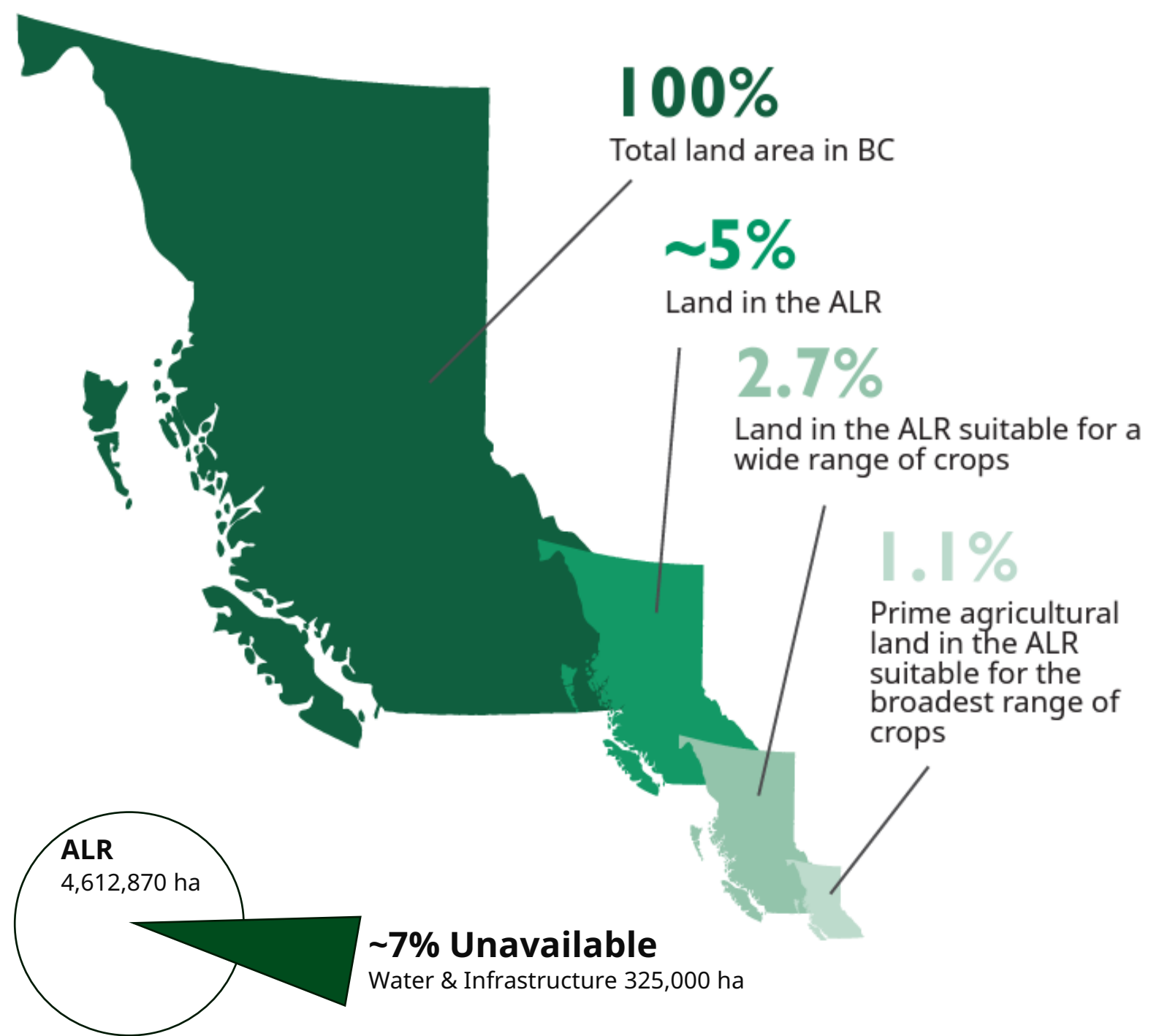
Alex Haalboom, Regional Planner  
Jenny Huynh, Soil Resource Supervisor (NOI)

Provincial AAC Workshop - February 24, 2025

# Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR)

- A provincial land use zone designated under the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* where:
  - Agriculture is recognized as priority use
  - Farming is encouraged
  - Non-agricultural uses are regulated
- Established based on biophysical characteristics and capability to support agriculture
- Represents ~5% of province's land base





# ALC Purposes and Priorities

## *Agricultural Land Commission Act Section 6*

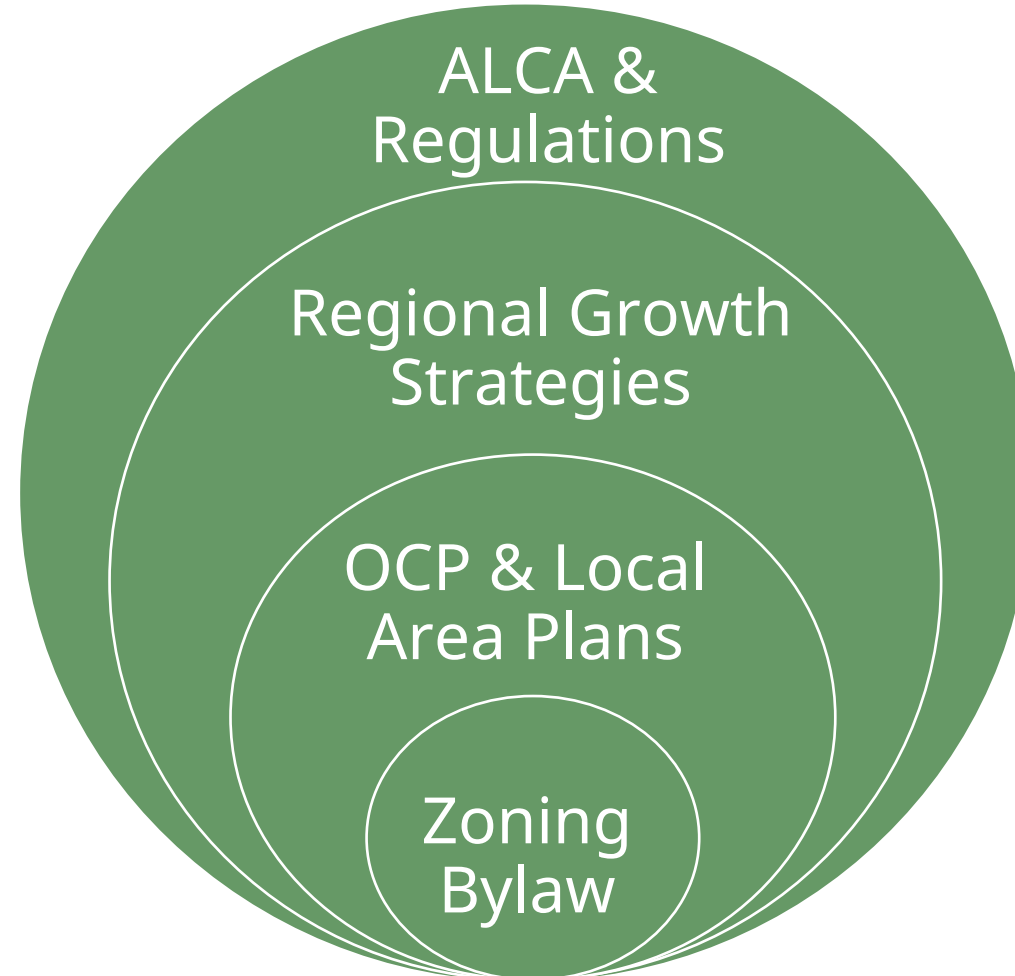
- **Purpose of the Commission:**
  - Preserve the ALR
  - Encourage farming with other communities of interest
  - Encourage local governments, First Nations, the government... to enable and accommodate farm use within the ALR
- **Priority of the Commission:**
  - Protect and enhance the size, integrity, and continuity of the ALR
  - Use of the ALR for farm use



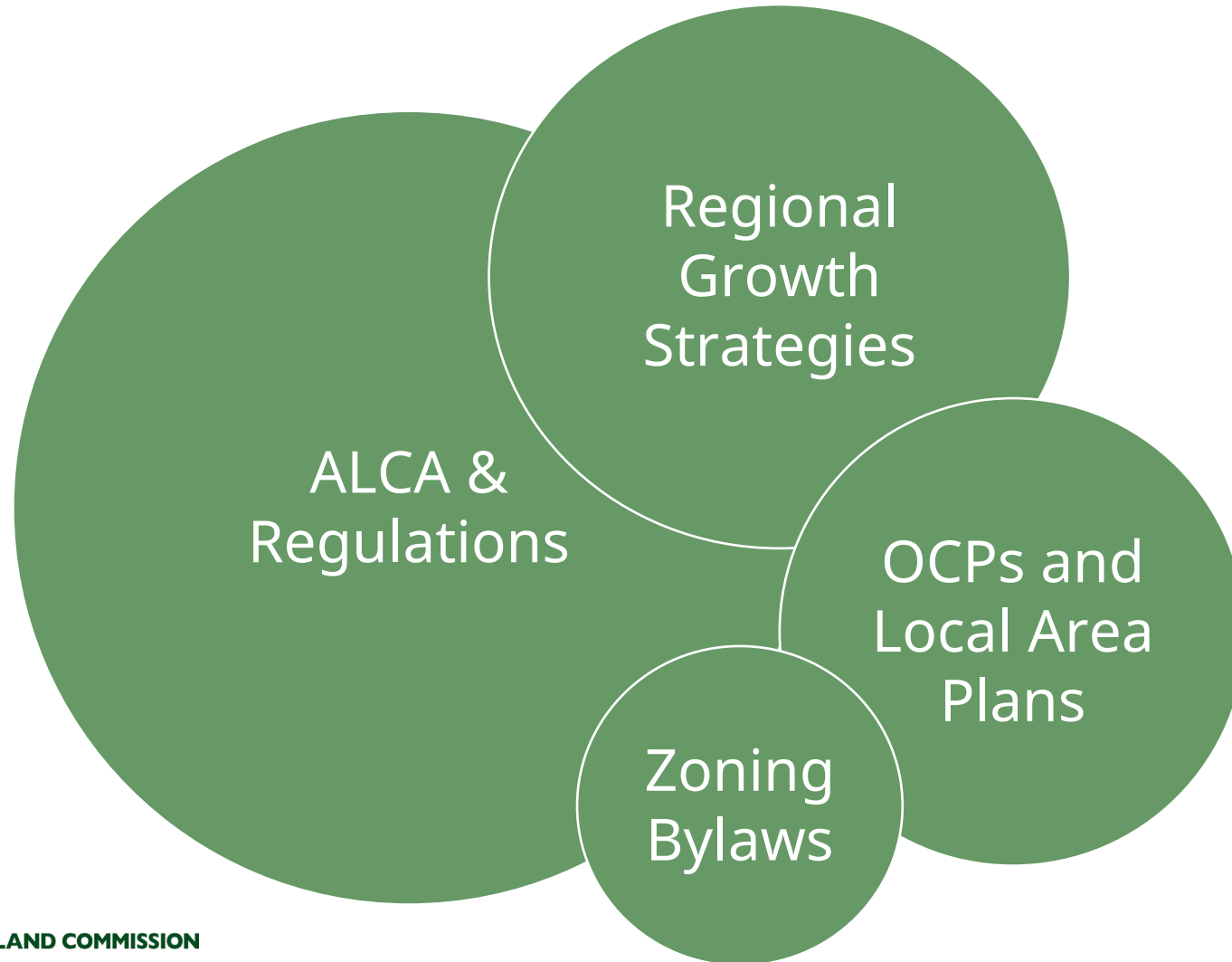


# Framework

# Legislative Framework: The Goal



# Legislative Framework: The Reality





# the ALR

# 3 Pathways for lawful use in the ALR

## APPLICATIONS

For uses not expressly permitted  
LG must determine whether to forward to ALC

# Permitted Farm and Non-Farm Uses



Farm retail sales



Farm product processing



Cannabis production



Alcohol production facilities



Agri-tourism activities



Forestry



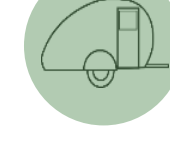
Parks and similar areas



Gathering for an event



Home-based business



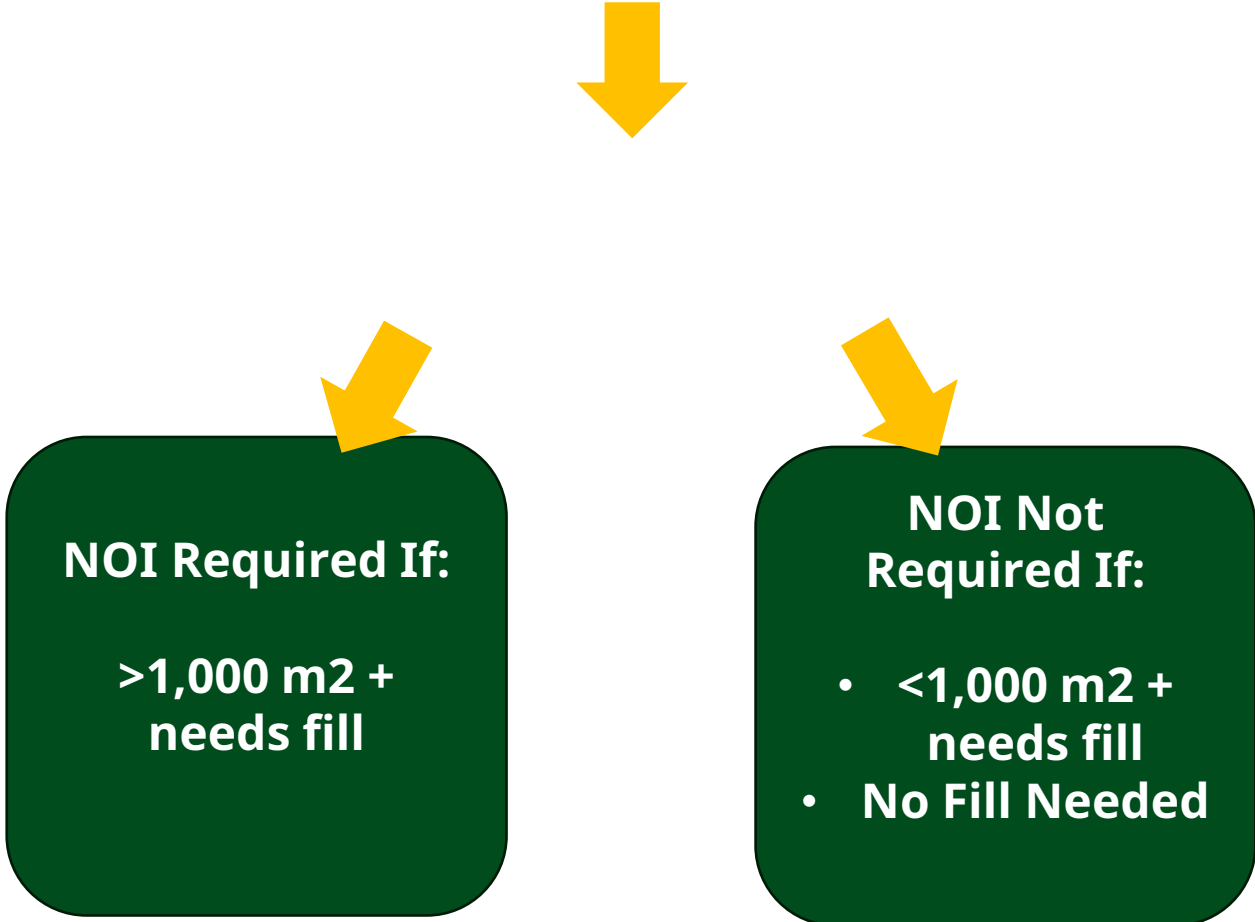
Agri-tourism Accommodation

# Structures and Fill Placement in the ALR

- Fill placement (or removal) is NOT permitted except in very specific cases
  - <1000 m2 fill area for a Principal Residence or a Farm Structure
- NOI process is fast-tracked authorization for fill that supports uses that are permitted but still need fill
  - > 1000 m2 fill area for a Principal Residence or a Farm Structure
  - Fill placement for accessory residential structures, additional residences
- Structure and associated fill should meet the intent of the ALCA (prioritize farming)
- LGs and ALC authorize structures, depending on if NOI is required



# NOI or Not?

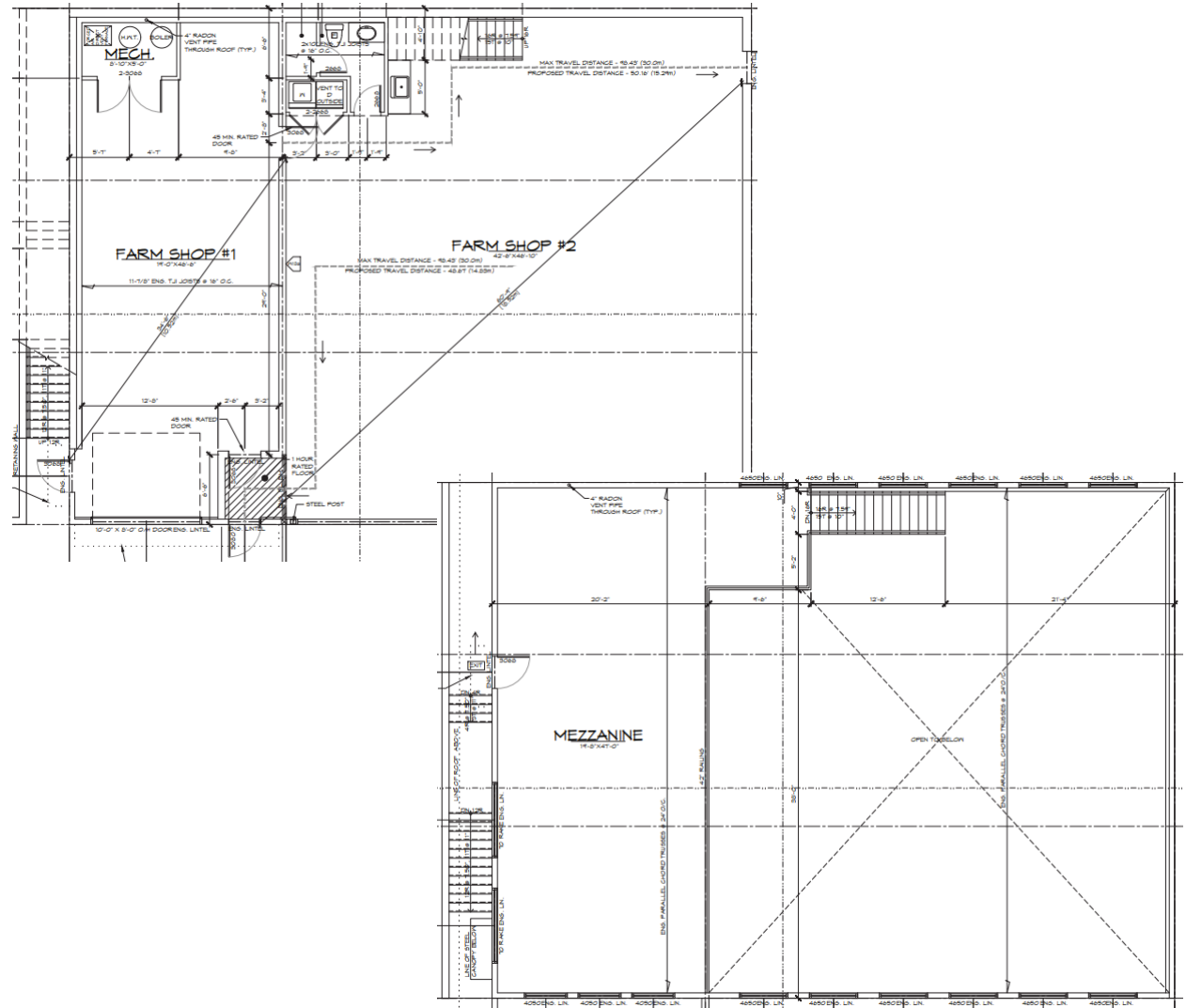


# Farm Structures

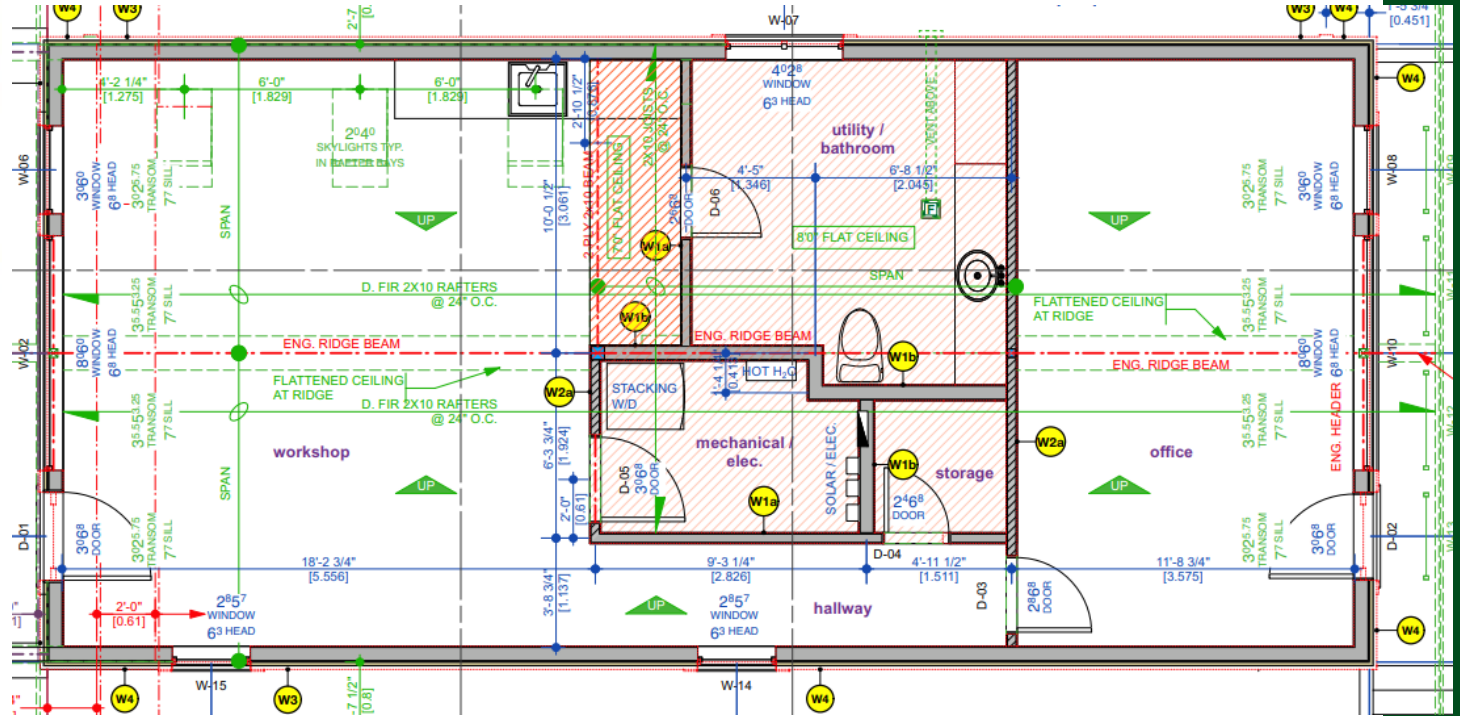


Fill for a **Farm Structure:**  
<1,000 m<sup>2</sup> area (NOT BY VOLUME)

# Farm Structure Example 1



# Farm Structure Example 2



# Necessary Farm Use Structures in the ALR Guidelines

October 29, 2025

This document provides guidance for the construction of structures necessary for a farm use in the Agricultural Land Reserve Use Regulation ("ALR Use Regulation"), including structures necessary for a farm use permitted under the Agricultural Land Reserve Use Regulation ("ALR Use Regulation"), as considered by the Agricultural Land Commission ("ALC Notice of Intent for the placement of fill for a structure

## 1. Structures Necessary for a Farm Use

Section 5 of the ALR Use Regulation permits a structure, other than a residential structure, that is necessary for a farm use ("necessary farm use structure") to be constructed on agricultural land. A "farm use" is an occupation of agricultural land, plants, mushrooms, truffles, or animals; a farm use that is necessary for a farm use; or an activity described in the *Farm Practices Protection (Right to Farm) Act*; or an activity described in the *ALR Use Regulation*. Section 5 of the ALR Use Regulation also includes a greenhouse, a structure for mushroom production, or an aquaculture facility.

A farm use, by definition in the ALCA, does not include a residential structure.

A necessary farm use structure may not be prohibited by local government law; however, it may be regulated.

In considering whether a structure is necessary for a farm use, the term "farm building" is informative. Section 1.2.1.2 of the *Code (1995)* defines a farm building as a "building or part of a building that is used for a residential occupancy and which is associated with and used for the practice of farming and used essentially for the housing of livestock, the production, storage, or processing of agricultural and horticultural products, or the raising of animals for food or other purposes."

## 2. Farm Structure Necessity

A necessary farm use structure must be demonstrated to be required for a property or planned farm use. The structures must be commensurate with the farm use occurring on, or planned for, the property. Therefore, landowners are required to provide supporting rationale, documentation, or evidence to the local government, First Nation government, or the ALC respecting the necessity to support farm use on the property such as the following:

- Evidence the property is assessed as Class 9 - Farm under the BC Assessment Act and that an application for a developing farm has been submitted for the property.
- Rationale for the proposed necessary farm use structure including the farm use, location, and size.

## 3. Necessary Farm Use Structure Design

Necessary farm use structures in the ALR should generally be designed to meet the following requirements:

- Compliance with the National Farm Building Code of Canada (1995) where possible.
- Exterior and interior designs consistent with farm use. In particular, necessary farm use structures should include:
  - Exterior design and materials that are consistent with farm use (see Figures 1 and 2).
  - Interior layout that is functional for a farm use such as high ceilings, open interior spaces, door clearance for farm equipment, and a single-story design (mezzanine open to the room it is located in unless a farm use need is demonstrated (see Figure 3)). The mezzanine within a room shall be not greater than one-third of the room in which it is located.
  - If necessary, bathrooms limited to a maximum of two plus a sink and toilet, unless the need for an additional fixture is demonstrated for specific farm purposes such as "showers" for biosecurity requirements, etc.
- Necessary farm use structures should not be designed to include areas that are not converted to; residential, accessory residential uses, or non-farm uses. Excessive storage areas not justified for farm use. Necessary farm use structures should be commensurate with the size and scale of the agricultural use.

The submission of detailed building plans may be required by the local government, or ALC to confirm the structure's total floor area and the layout of the proposed structure.

Examples of structures designed for a necessary farm use:



Figure 1. Livestock barn



Figure 2. Farm machinery storage

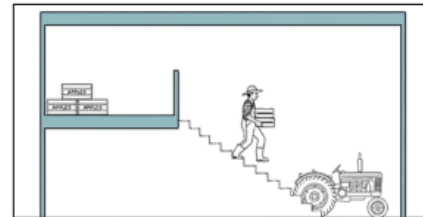


Figure 3. Mezzanine design

## 4. Fill Requirements for Necessary Farm Use Structures




The ALR Use Regulation permits a certain amount of fill to be placed for the construction of a necessary farm use structure without ALC review. For greater clarity, "fill" means any material brought onto ALR land other than materials exempted by regulation and includes aggregate or other structural fill materials necessary to facilitate construction of a necessary farm use structure. For more information, see [ALC Information Bulletin 07: Soil or Fill Uses in the ALR](#).

### Permitted Placement of Fill or Removal of Soil Without ALC Authorization

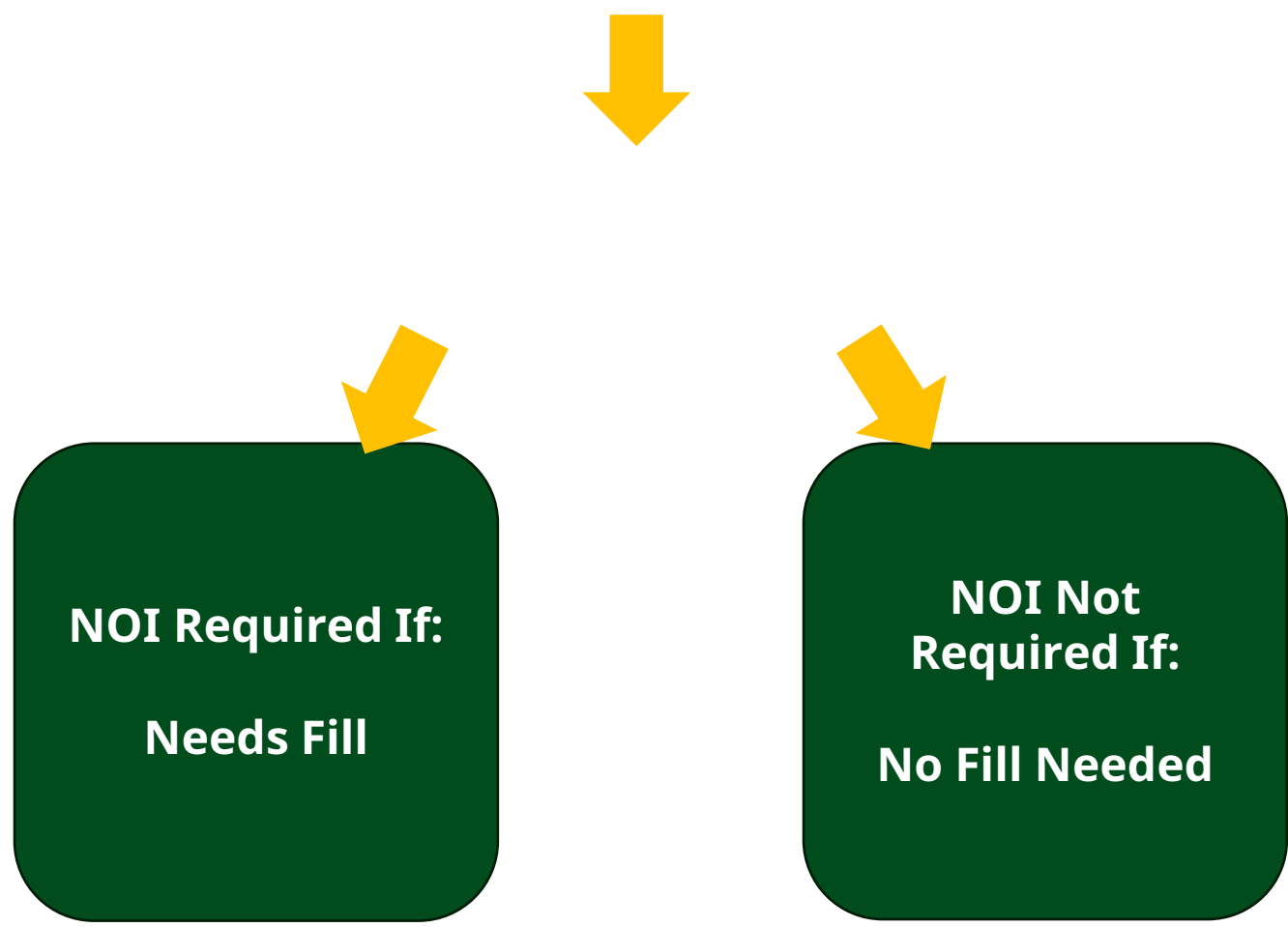
Deposition of fill or removal of soil to facilitate the construction or maintenance of a structure necessary for a farm use is permitted if the following criteria are met:

- The total area from which soil is removed, or on which fill is placed, does not exceed a 1,000 m<sup>2</sup> area; and

# Farm Use Structures Guidelines

- Necessity – evidence and rationale
  - e.g. big building, no farming, no clear farm plan; new owners 
  - e.g. existing farm operation, obvious ag. activity, reasonable size 
- Design – functional for farm use
  - e.g. high ceilings, large open interior spaces, door clearance for farm equipment, single storey 

# NOI or Not?



# Accessory Residential Use Structures



# Accessory Residential Use Structures in the ALR Guidelines

February 6, 2024

This document provides guidance for the construction, maintenance, or operation of structures, other than residential structures, necessary for a residential use, including structures necessary for a residential use permitted under the Agricultural Land Res Use Regulation ("ALR Use Regulation"), and structures being considered by the Agricultural Land Commission ("ALC") as part of a Notice of Intent ("NOI") for the placement of fill for a structure.

## 1. Fill Requirements for Accessory Residential Use Structures

The ALR Use Regulation does not provide for the placement of fill for the construction of any accessory structure. For greater clarity, "fill" means any material brought onto a land other than materials exempted by regulation and includes aggregate or other structural fill materials necessary to facilitate construction of an accessory structure. Therefore, for the construction of all accessory residential use structures regardless of the total floor area, the owner or person with a specified right of entry to the parcel must submit an NOI for related soil and fill/aggregate used in the construction.

## 2. Structures, Other Than Residential Structures, Necessary for a Residential Use

[Section 30 of the ALR Use Regulation](#) permits a structure, other than a residential structure, that is necessary for a residential use (an "accessory residential use structure").

An accessory residential use structure cannot contain residential uses that would ordinarily be contained within a residential structure (e.g., sleeping area, recreational room, gym, spa, etc.). In other words, residential uses are to be wholly contained within principal residence or an additional residence. Accessory residential use structures can be used to circumvent the size limits on principal or additional residences.

An accessory residential use structure for the purpose of section 30 of the ALR Use Regulation is one that is necessary to support the residential uses that are occurring on the parcel. For example, an accessory residential use structure might be required to house a utility including water pumps, electrical, septic, and generators for the purposes of a residential use. The determination of whether any

structure is necessary for a residential use rests with the Commission and will depend on the facts of each individual property.

Other residential use structures such as pools, tennis courts, hot tubs, fountains, and playgrounds are generally not considered to be accessory residential uses except in exceptional circumstances where their size and location have no impact to arable land.

When considering an NOI to place fill for an accessory residential use structure, the ALC CEO or their delegate will give consideration to the size of the structure, the siting of the proposed structure, to minimize impacts to agricultural land.

## 3. Accessory Residential Use Structures

The ALC CEO considers the following reasonable accessory residential use structures for which the placement of fill can be considered through an NOI:

- Personal recreational vehicle storage (e.g., boat, RV, snowmobile)
- Residential related workshop
- Household greenhouse (not for farm use)
- Tool/garden shed

Placement of fill for a detached garage for the principal residence is permitted if the Total Floor Area of the principal residence does not exceed the Total Floor Area of 500 m<sup>2</sup> plus the 42m<sup>2</sup> attached garage.

Consistent with [ALC Information Bulletin 05 – Residences in the ALR](#), a second residence can be constructed above a garage for the principal residence and an additional residence constructed above a garage for an additional residence.

## 4. Accessory Residential Use Structure Design

The following considerations relating to design and/or siting of an accessory residential use structure should be considered by the ALC CEO or their delegate when considering an NOI for an accessory residential use structure in the ALR.

For workshops, recreational vehicle storage, or detached garages:

- on parcels 40 ha or less: a maximum total floor area of 130 m<sup>2</sup> if the local government permits, whichever is more restrictive;
- on parcels over 40 ha: a maximum total floor area of 130 m<sup>2</sup> if the local government permits, whichever is more restrictive;
- the structure is single storey;

- the interior layout of the workshop or recreational vehicle storage consists of one large interior space (no partition walls) and is accessed through large bay doors;
- the structure is clustered on the property with residential structures.

**Local governments have the authority to be more restrictive and/or may prohibit accessory residential use structures. A decision on an NOI does not circumvent local government authority, and in no way compels the local government to issue a building permit.**

Examples of structures designed for an accessory residential use:



Figure 1. 80 m<sup>2</sup> garage/workshop (on <40 ha)



Figure 2. 2139 m<sup>2</sup> garage/RV storage (on >40 ha)

Photos courtesy of the Garage Plan Shop

For household greenhouse:

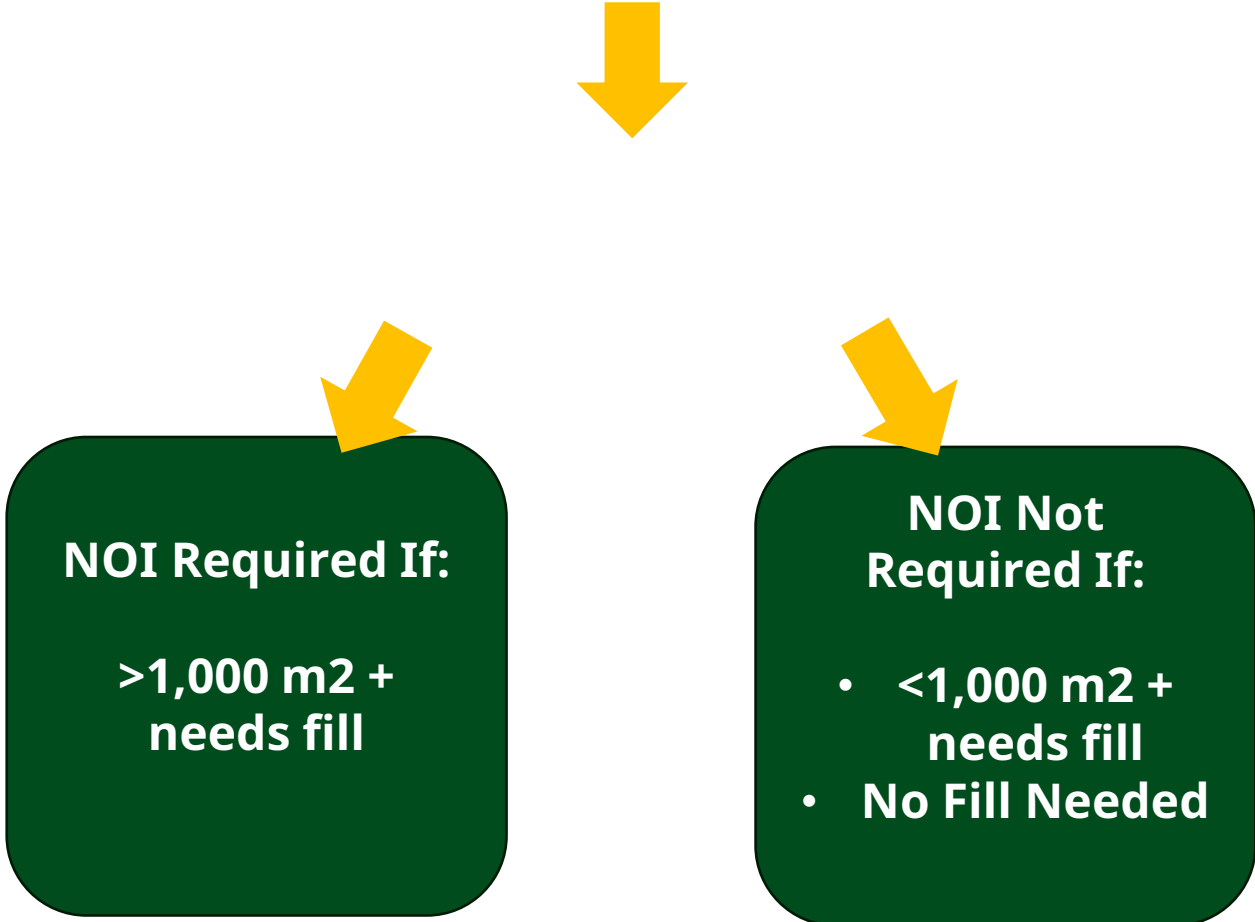
- constructed entirely of poly or glass with metal/poly/wood frame;
- used for the production of household foods; not residential uses (e.g., sunroom); and
- clustered on the property with residential structures.

Tool and gardens sheds should be small in nature and commensurate with the use.

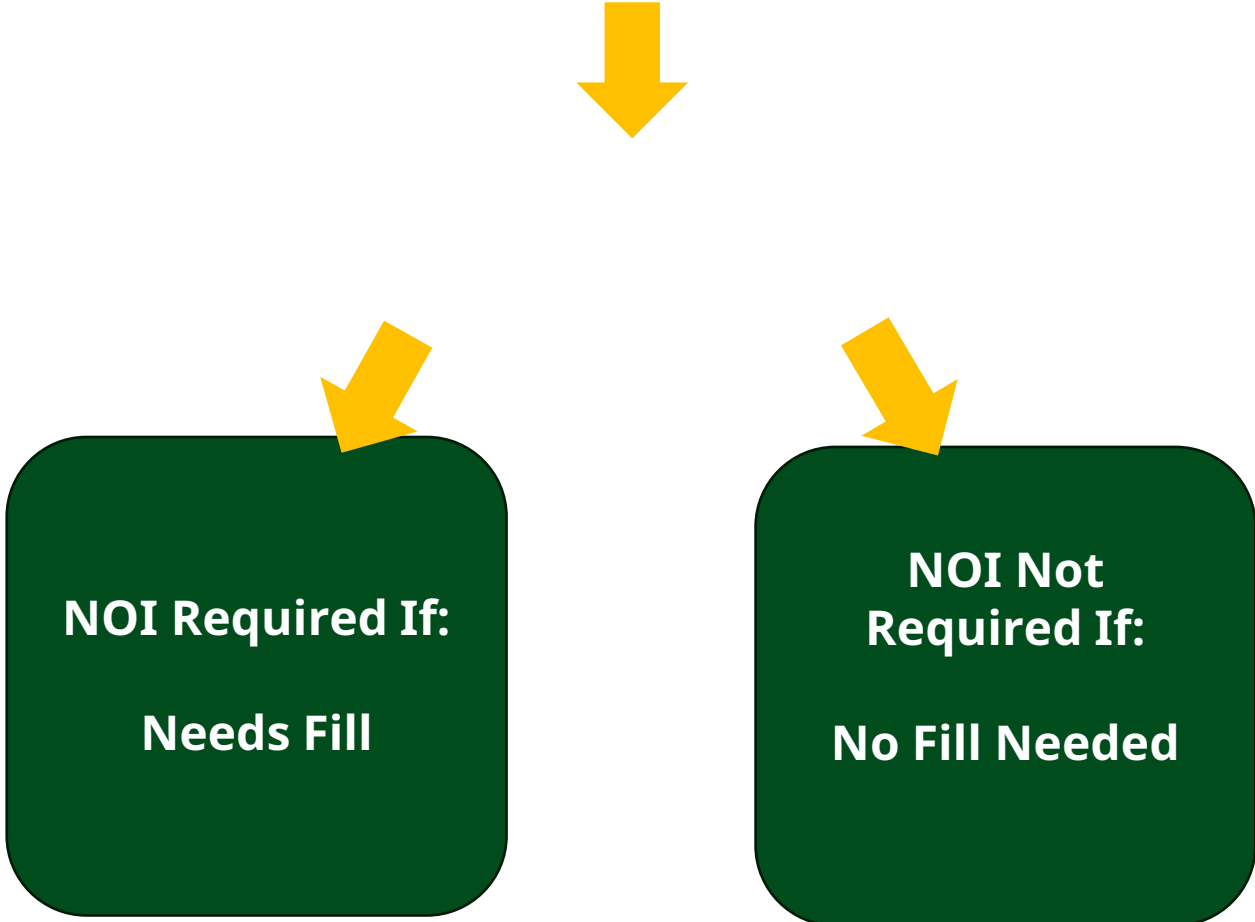
The submission of detailed building floor plans may be required by the local government, First Nation government, or the ALC to confirm the structure's total floor area and to assess the layout and use of the proposed structure.

# Accessory Residential Structures Guidelines

- Types: personal rec. vehicle storage, residential workshops, household greenhouses, tool/garden sheds
- Design/siting **guidelines** for workshops/vehicle storage:
  - <40 ha: a maximum total floor area of 90 m<sup>2</sup>
  - >40 ha: a maximum total floor area of 186 m<sup>2</sup>
  - single storey
  - one large interior space
  - clustered with other residential structures



# NOI or Not?



# Principal Residence Total Floor Area (TFA)\*

Attics excluded

Up to 42 m<sup>2</sup>  
garage excluded

Basement or  
crawl space  
excluded



- Measured to the outer surface of the exterior walls
- Includes enclosed balconies, enclosed porches or verandas

# Additional Residence Total Floor Area\*

Attics excluded



- Measured to the inner surface of the exterior walls
- Including enclosed or partially enclosed balconies, enclosed porches or verandas, basements, attached garages and unenclosed carports

Crawl space excluded but Basement included

# Additional Residence Total Floor Area\*

Garage for principal residence  
excluded

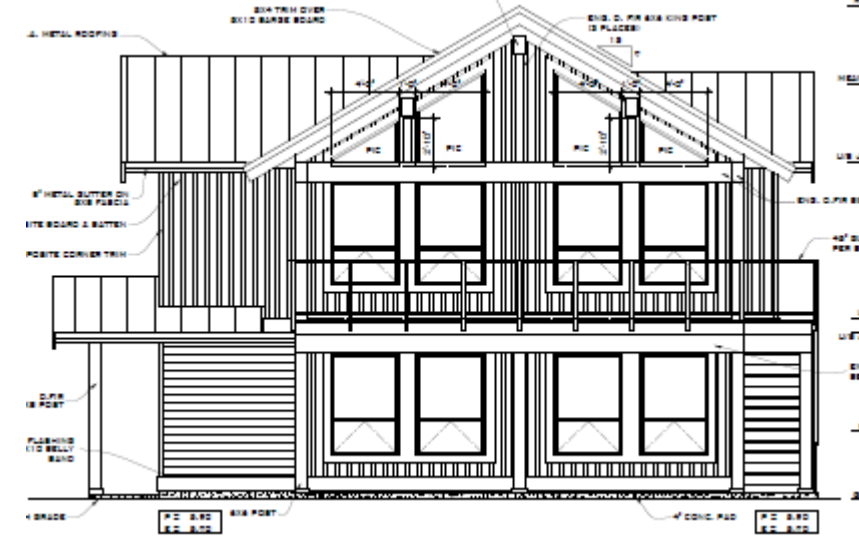
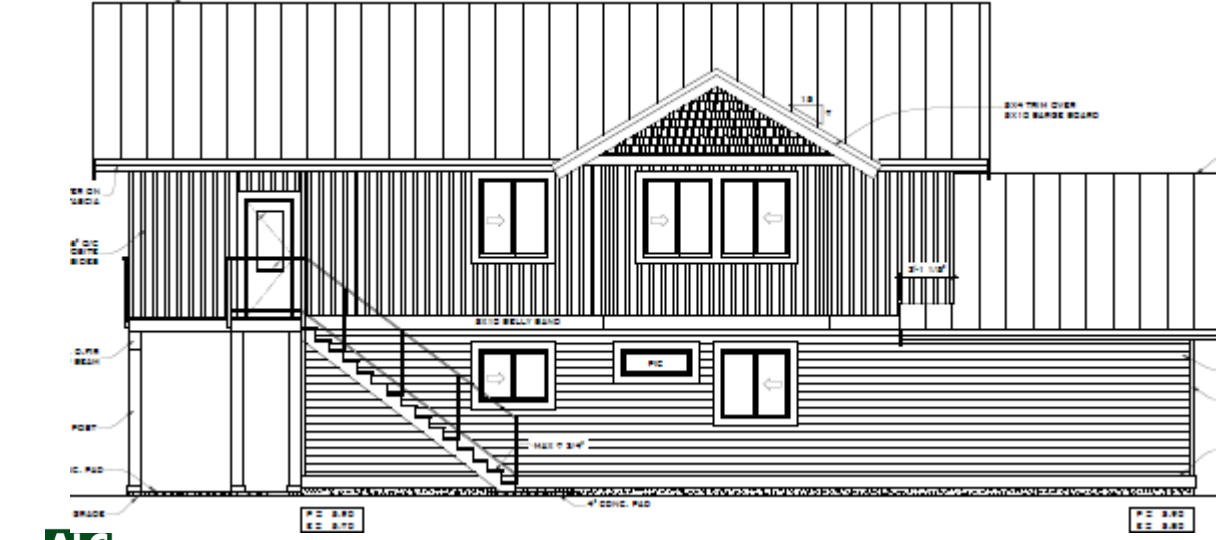
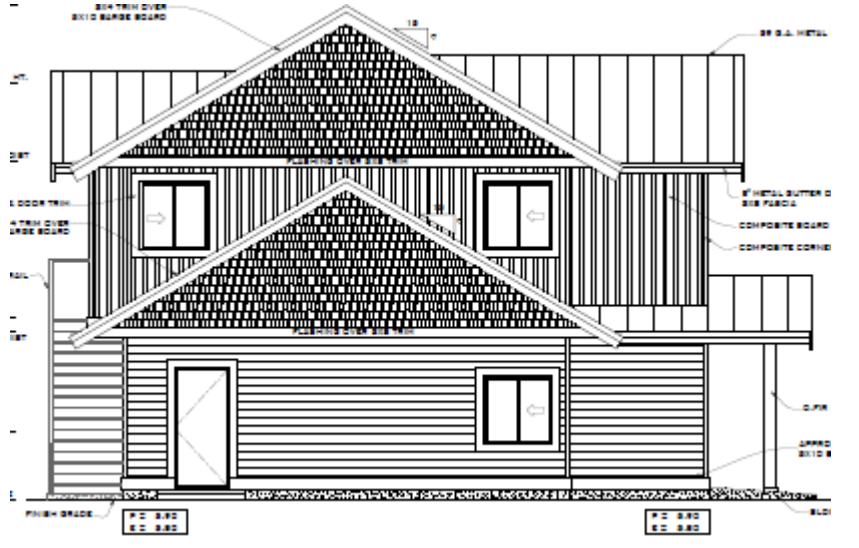
Garage for additional residence  
included

Garage is:

- One level
- Same area as residence above
- One large space
- No internal access to residence
- Sited close to principal residence



# We Don't Want to See This Type of Carriage House

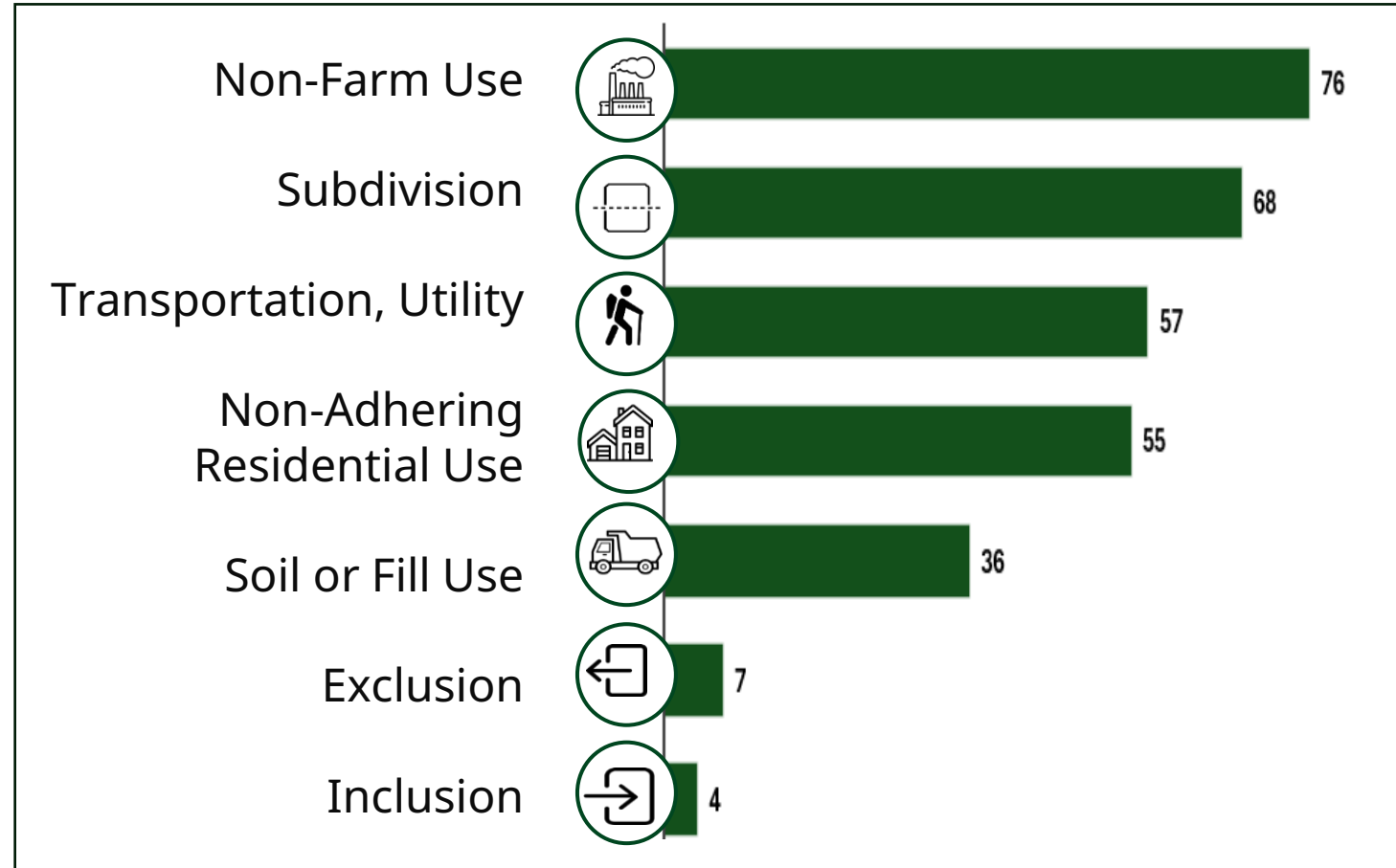




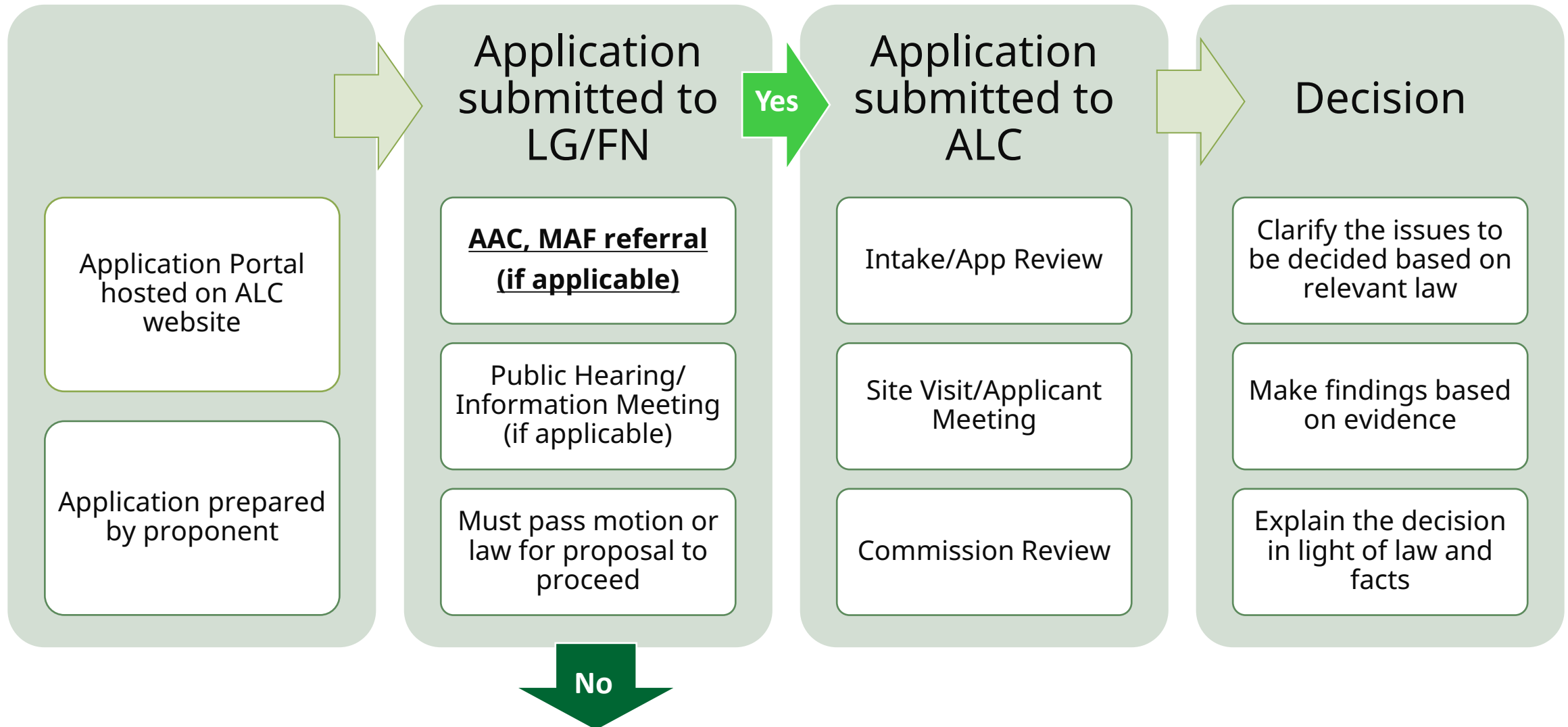
# Process

# ALC Applications

- ALC approval is required to:
  - Conduct a use not permitted in the ALC Act or ALR regulations
  - Conduct a use that doesn't comply with the thresholds permitted in the ALC Act or ALR regulations
  - Exclude land, include land, or subdivide land in the ALR



# Application Process



# Agricultural Advisory Committees

- AACs provide LGs with timely advice from knowledgeable members of the local farming community
- Advise on ALC Applications
- Advise on broader agricultural policies and bylaws



# Things to Remember

- LGs don't have to leave agricultural decisions to the ALC
  - Can refuse to forward an application to the ALC
  - AAC input is helpful
  - Save time, \$\$, and effort
- The ALC won't always make the same decision as AAC comments
  - Commission considers all comments but must make decisions in the context of the ALCA
  - AAC is considering its own community need and policies

# Resources



## **ALC Legislation, Policies, Information Bulletins, etc.**

- <https://www.alc.gov.bc.ca/resources/>

## **ALC Regional Planners**

- Email: [ALC.Referrals@gov.bc.ca](mailto:ALC.Referrals@gov.bc.ca)
- AAC and LG workshops

## **NOI Questions**

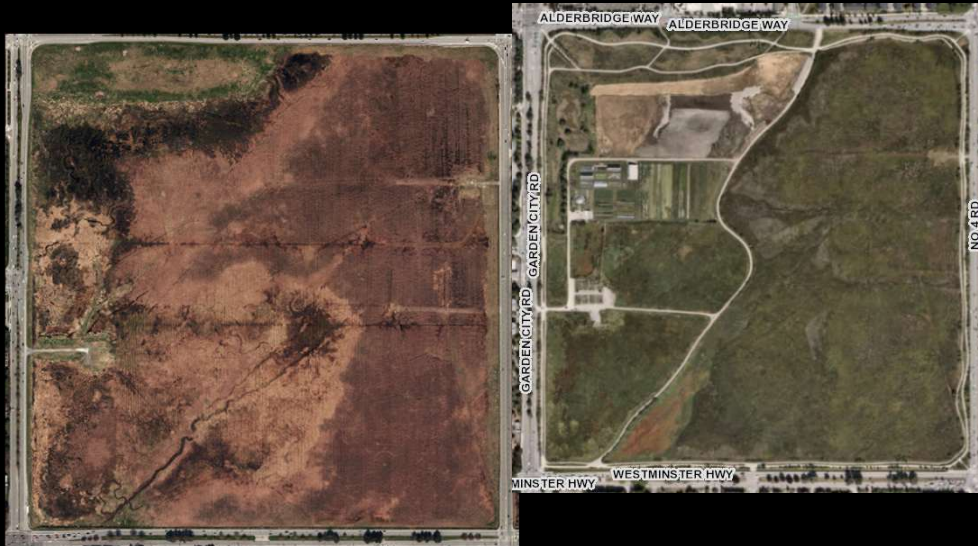
- Email: [ALC.Soil@gov.bc.ca](mailto:ALC.Soil@gov.bc.ca)
- Building Plans

**Thank you!**



**PROVINCIAL AGRICULTURAL  
LAND COMMISSION**

# Regulating the Movement of Soil and Other Material



THE GOOD



THE BAD



THE UGLY

## Contact Info:

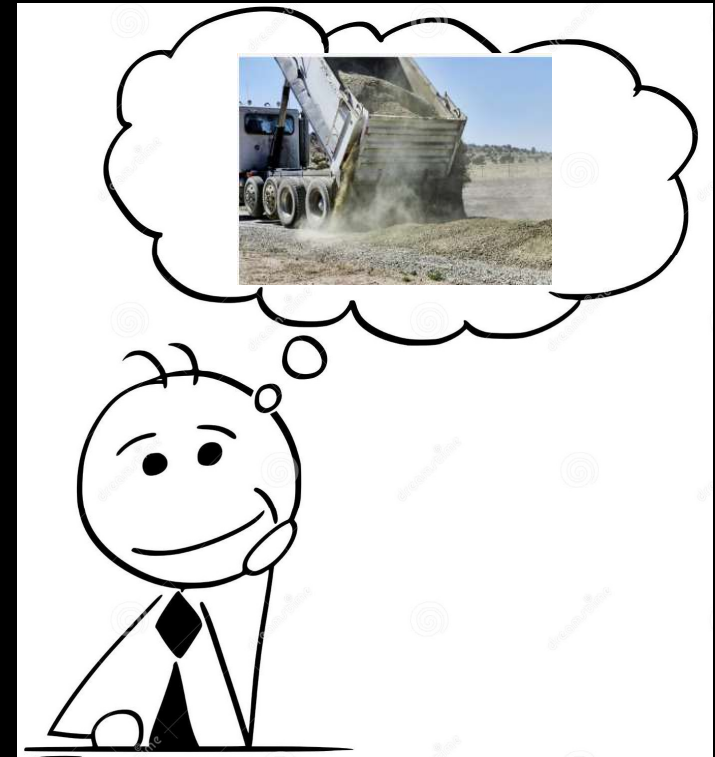
Mike Morin  
Soil Bylaw Officer  
Community Bylaws

City of Richmond  
6911 No. 3 Rd  
Richmond, BC V6Y 2C1

604.204.8625  
[mmorin1@richmond.ca](mailto:mmorin1@richmond.ca)

## Presentation Outline:

- **Why are there a 'fill issues'?**
- **What is a Soil Bylaw Officer?**
- **The Soil Bylaw Officer's Portfolio**
- **Enforcement & Compliance**
- **Soil deposit application process**
- **The Challenges**
- **What is your community's 'why'?**
- **Soil Bylaw creation & the stakeholders**
- **Final Comments & Questions**



## Why do local communities have a fill issue:

- **Approved development**
- **Source site management (or lack there of)**
- **Few legitimate places to take fill**
- **Fill has to find a home**
- **Lack of available & affordable industrial land**
- **Truck parking**
- **Fill = \$\$\$**



## What is a Soil Bylaw Officer?

**An individual responsible for regulating the movement of soil and other material within the community.**

**Provides enforcement when property owners do not comply with the Soil Bylaw.**

**The primary objective is to protect:**

- **Property owners**
- **Farmland**
- **Natural resources**
- **Infrastructure**
- **City from liability**



**The portfolio of a Soil Bylaw Officer:**

- **Review and coordinate the soil deposit and/or removal application process**
- **Issue soil deposit and/or removal permits**
- **Monitor approved fill sites and unauthorized fill sites**
- **Issue stop work orders and removal/remediation orders**
- **Issue fines**



How does the City of Richmond attempt to obtain compliance?

- **Voluntary compliance is the desired outcome**

What happens when voluntary compliance has failed?

- **Fines**
- **Legal action**



## What are your most important enforcement tools?

### ➤ **Bylaw Offence Notices ie. ticketing/fines**

- Register the notices on title as judgements
- Place a note on taxes (identifies issue for potential buyer)

## When issuing fines do not work?

### ➤ **Seek an injunction via the BC Supreme Court**

- Requires retaining internal or external legal counsel
- Typically requires Council approval

HOME > LOCAL NEWS

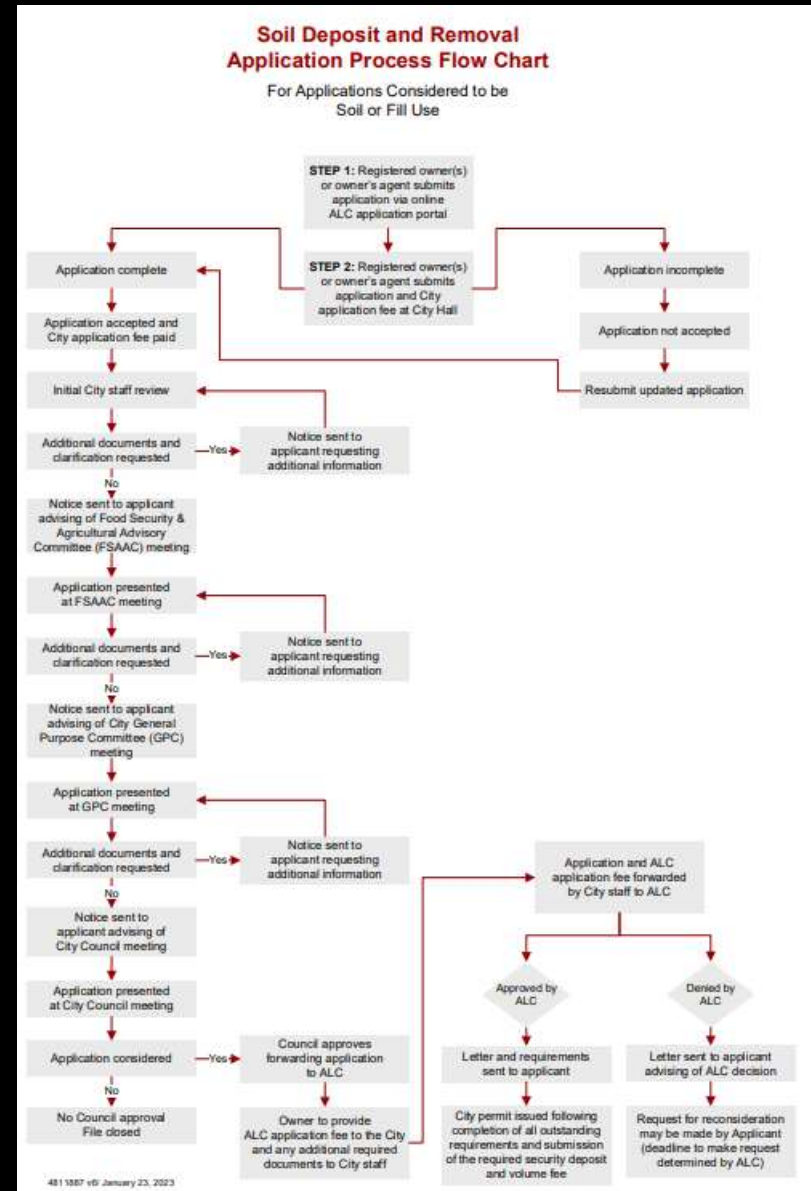
Richmond News  
Sept 13 2024

# Richmond trucking company fined \$100K, ordered to cease operating and remove fill

An ALR property on No. 6 Road has been used as a parking area for commercial trucks.

## Soil deposit & removal application process and stakeholders:

- City staff (multiple departments)
- Property owner/applicant/agent
- Qualified Professionals
- Agricultural Advisory Committee
- City Council
- Agricultural Land Commission
- External legal counsel
- Provincial and federal agencies & private entities



## What are the challenges?

- **Resources & staffing**
- **Proving non-compliance**
- **Obtaining compliance**
- **Project monitoring**
- **Standardized Operating Procedures**

### Day-to-day issues for staff:

- **Accessing properties to assess complaints**
- **Resident & contractor interactions**
- **Time management (file overload)**

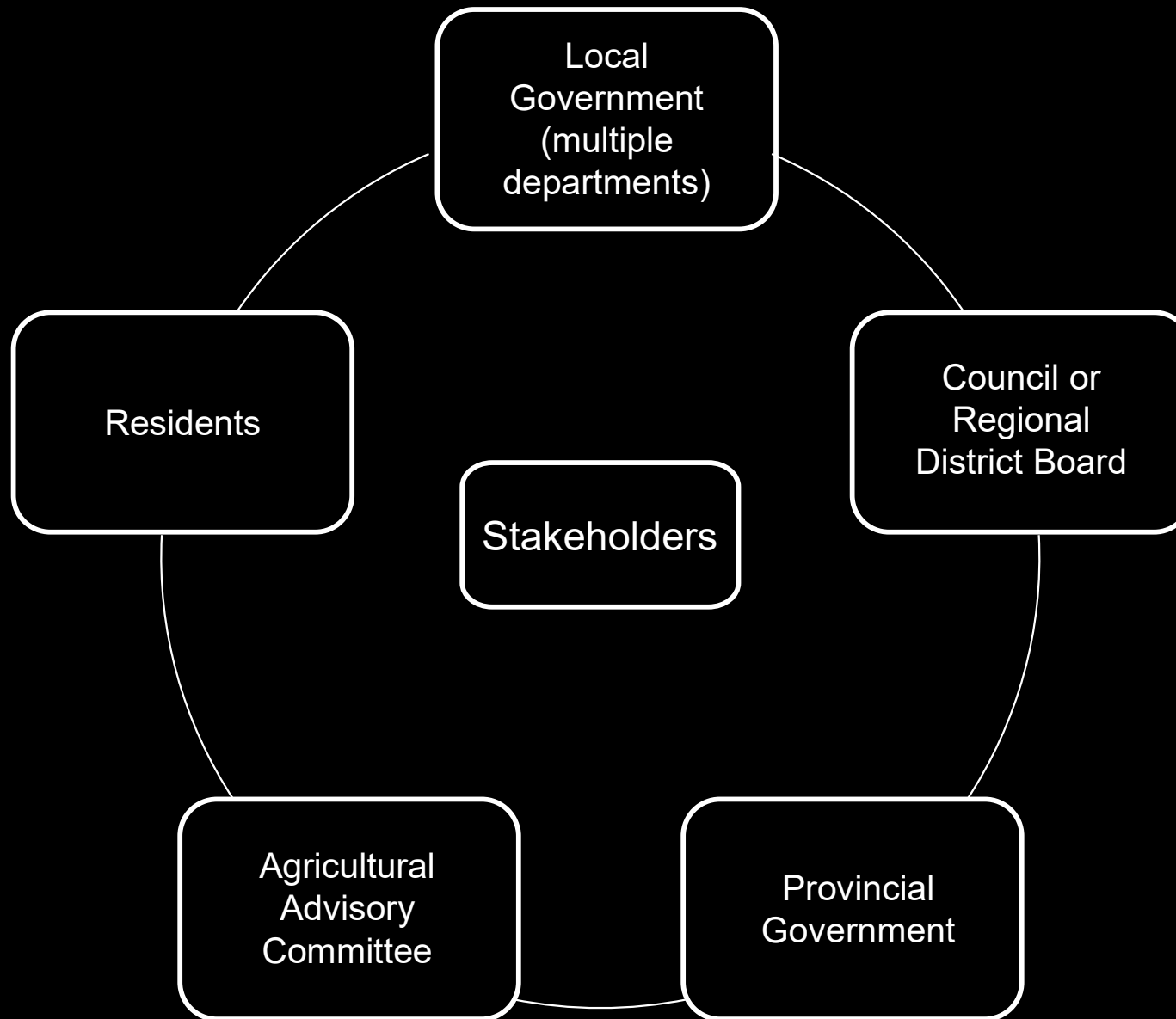




# Fill...what is the source?



## Who are the stakeholders when creating a soil deposit and removal bylaw?



“There are known knowns, things we know that we know; and there are known unknowns, things that we know we don't know. But there are also unknown unknowns, things we do not know we don't know.”

– Donald Rumsfeld



Contact Info:

**Mike Morin**  
Soil Bylaw Officer  
Community Bylaws

City of Richmond  
6911 No. 3 Rd  
Richmond, BC V6Y 2C1

604.204.8625  
[mmorin1@richmond.ca](mailto:mmorin1@richmond.ca)



# Death by a Thousand Applications – Why Subdivision is Agriculture’s Ultimate Nemesis

11<sup>th</sup> Annual Province Wide Agricultural Advisory Committee Workshop  
February 24, 2026



# The Nuts and Bolts of Subdivision

- Greater gains from small parcels
- Two groups who subdivide ALR
  1. ALR landowners
    - Downsizing in place
    - Profit seekers
  2. Farmers/ranchers
    - Average age = 58 years
    - 9 in 10 farms do not have a succession plan
    - Subdivision is often the succession plan

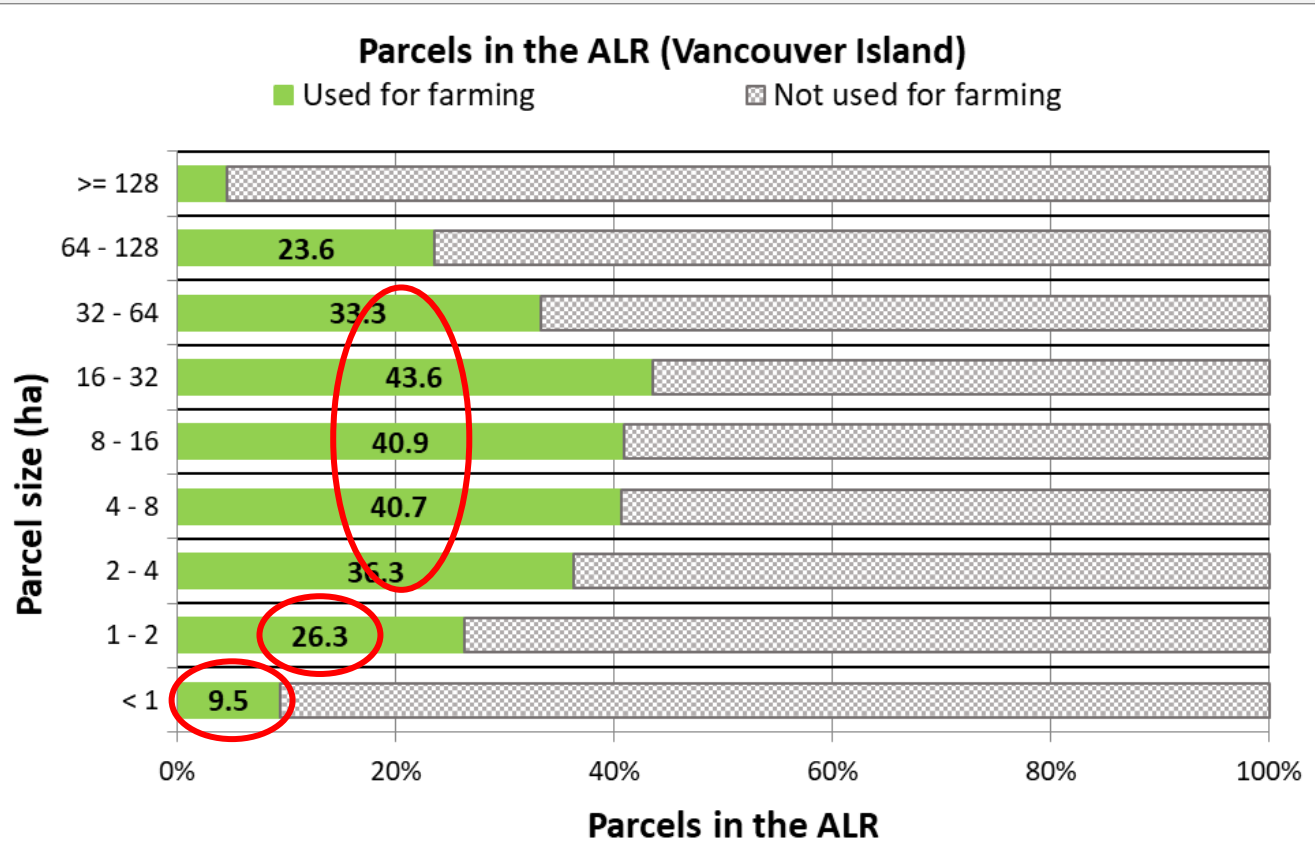


# Why is Subdivision Bad For Agriculture?

1. Diminished agricultural potential
2. Increase in land cost per ha
3. Increase in conflict
4. Smaller parcels are less likely to be farmed



# Small Lots = Less Likely to be Farmed

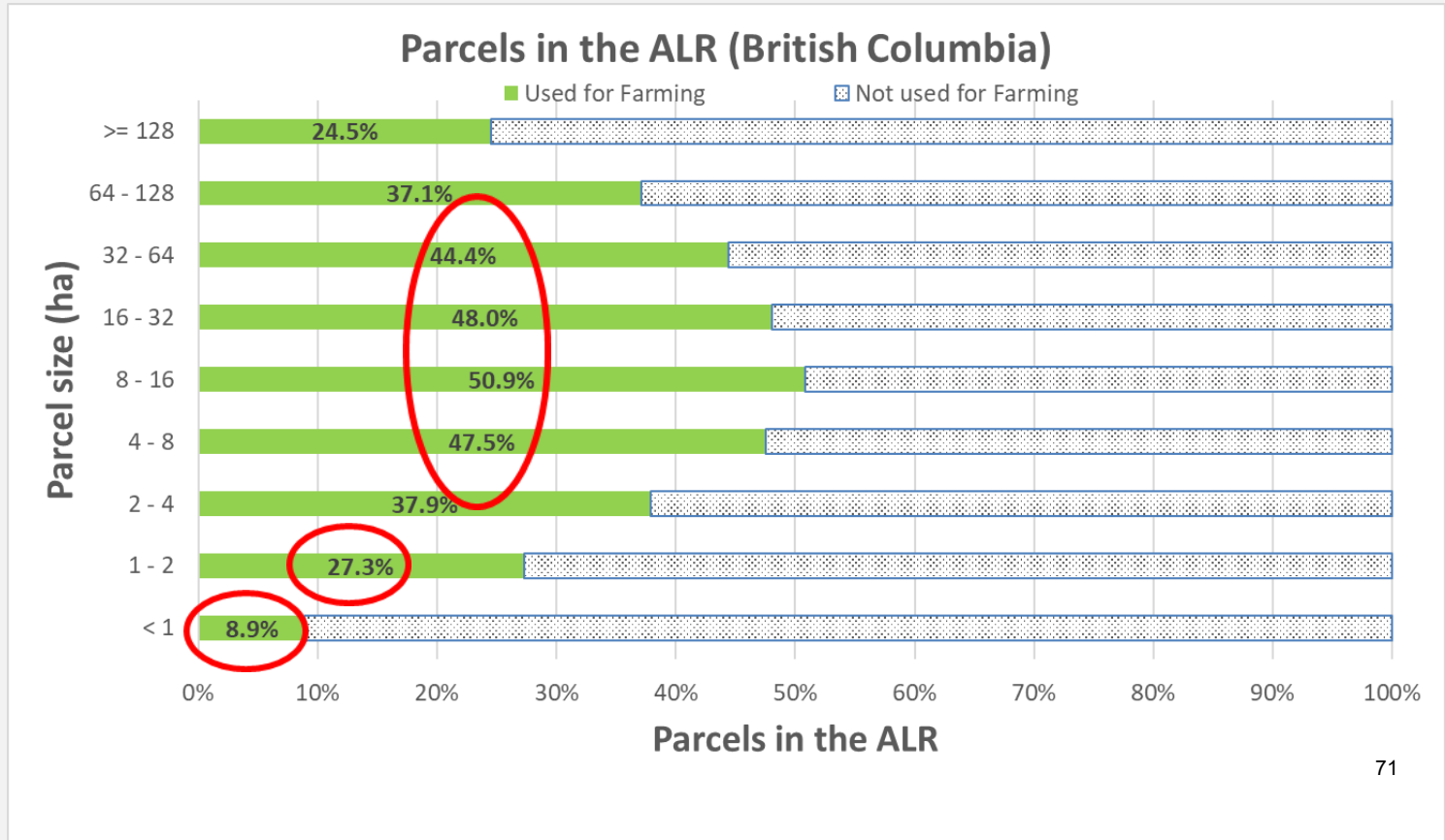


# Sooooooooooooo Many Small Lots

Parcel Size (ha)	Total Parcels	Total Parcels (%)
< 1	2,718	25.7 %
1 - 2	1,739	16.5 %
2 - 4	1,987	18.8 %
4 - 8	1,601	15.2 %
8 - 16	1,070	10.1 %
16 - 32	769	7.3 %
32 - 64	423	4.0 %
64 - 128	161	1.5 %
>= 128	88	0.8 %
<b>Total Parcel Count</b>	<b>10,556</b>	<b>100%</b>

**\*\* 42.2% of all ALR properties on Vancouver Island are less than 2 ha!**

# Once Again...Small Lots = Less Likely to be Farmed



## Once again...Soooooo Many Small Lots

Parcel Size (ha)	Total Parcels	Total Parcels (%)
< 1	26,494	25.6%
1 - 2	12,743	12.3%
2 - 4	18,168	17.6%
4 - 8	12,099	11.7%
8 - 16	8,602	8.3%
16 - 32	6,974	6.7%
32 - 64	7,919	7.7%
64 - 128	6,837	6.6%
>= 128	3,612	3.5%
<b>Total Parcel Count</b>	<b>103,448</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**\*\* 37.9% of all ALR properties in BC are less than 2 ha! (42.2% for Vancouver Island)**

## Wait...Subdivision is Great!

- Don't be fooled! Applicants are clever (well, not really)

Things Applicants Say	What Reed Thinks	What They Really Mean
"I want to create a small parcel for a young family to farm!"	No, you don't	"I want money"
"But, but, after subdivision the properties will remain in the ALR!"	So what?	"I want money"
"My son wants to start a farm!"	No, he doesn't	"My son needs help"

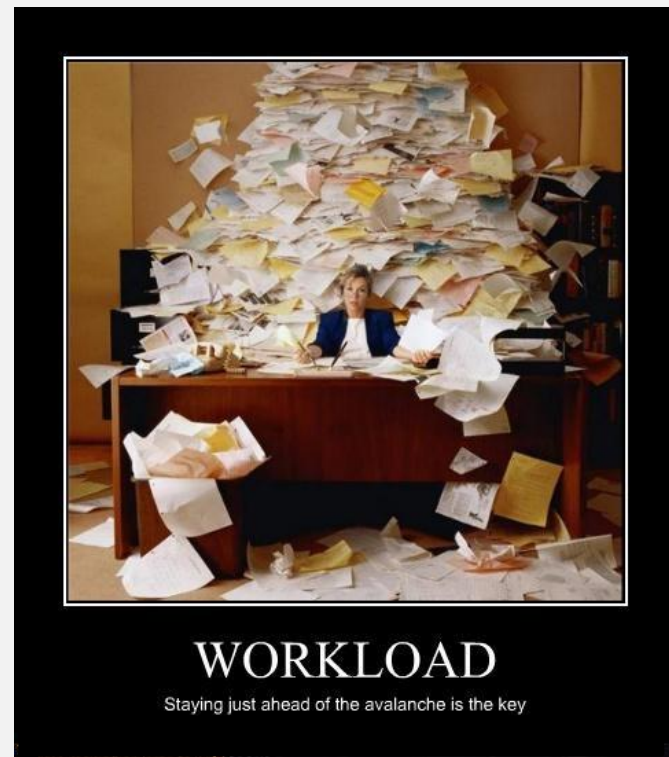
# 2022 Kwantlen Polytechnic University



- Reviewed 540 ALC subdivision and non-farm use applications
- “30% of all new parcels created as a result of subdivision ceased to have a farm class status”
- “64% of all the parcels had their ownerships transferred within three years after non-farm use and subdivision applications were approved. This percentage becomes higher for subdivided parcels”

# Subdivision Referral Impact Study

- ALC subdivision application referrals from 29 LGs over an 18-month time frame
- 80% assessed by Ministry staff as “not beneficial to agriculture”
  - Still being forwarded to ALC for decision
- 92% of the time ALC decisions are consistent with Ministry assessment

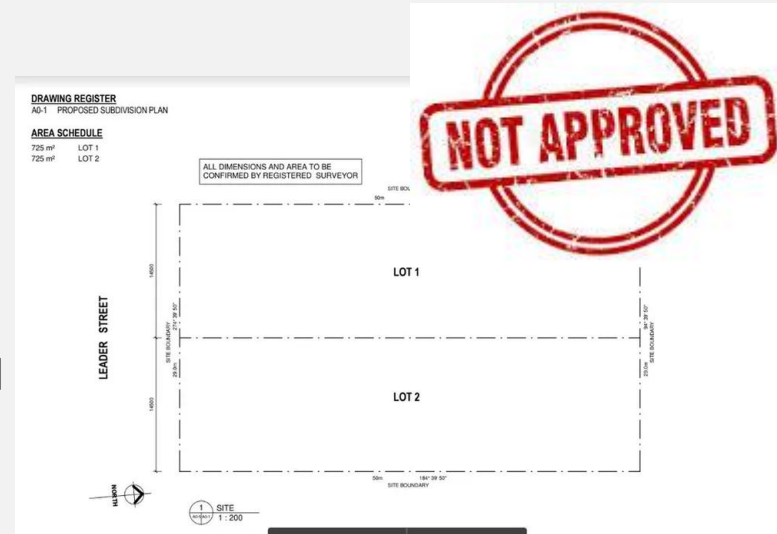




**Waste. Of. Time.**

# Subdivision Referral Impact Study Continued

- Waste of time for everyone
- Preliminary assessment conducted by Ministry staff – Two paths
  1. “Not beneficial to agriculture” – Template letter sent to LGs
  2. “No impact/beneficial to agriculture” – Parcel specific referral letter sent to LGs



# What is the Ministry Doing?

- Encourage ALR landowners to pursue alternative options
  - B.C.'s Land Matching Program
- Resources to producers to support successful farm transition
  - B.C. Agri-Business Planning Program
  - Succession planning workshops and webinars for farm transition
- Lots of online documents available





Ministry of  
Agriculture  
and Food

Reporting Progress on:

# Farm Classification Review

A Policy and Legislation Branch Project

February 24, 2026

# Guiding Policy Questions:

What is a **farmer**?

What is **farming**?

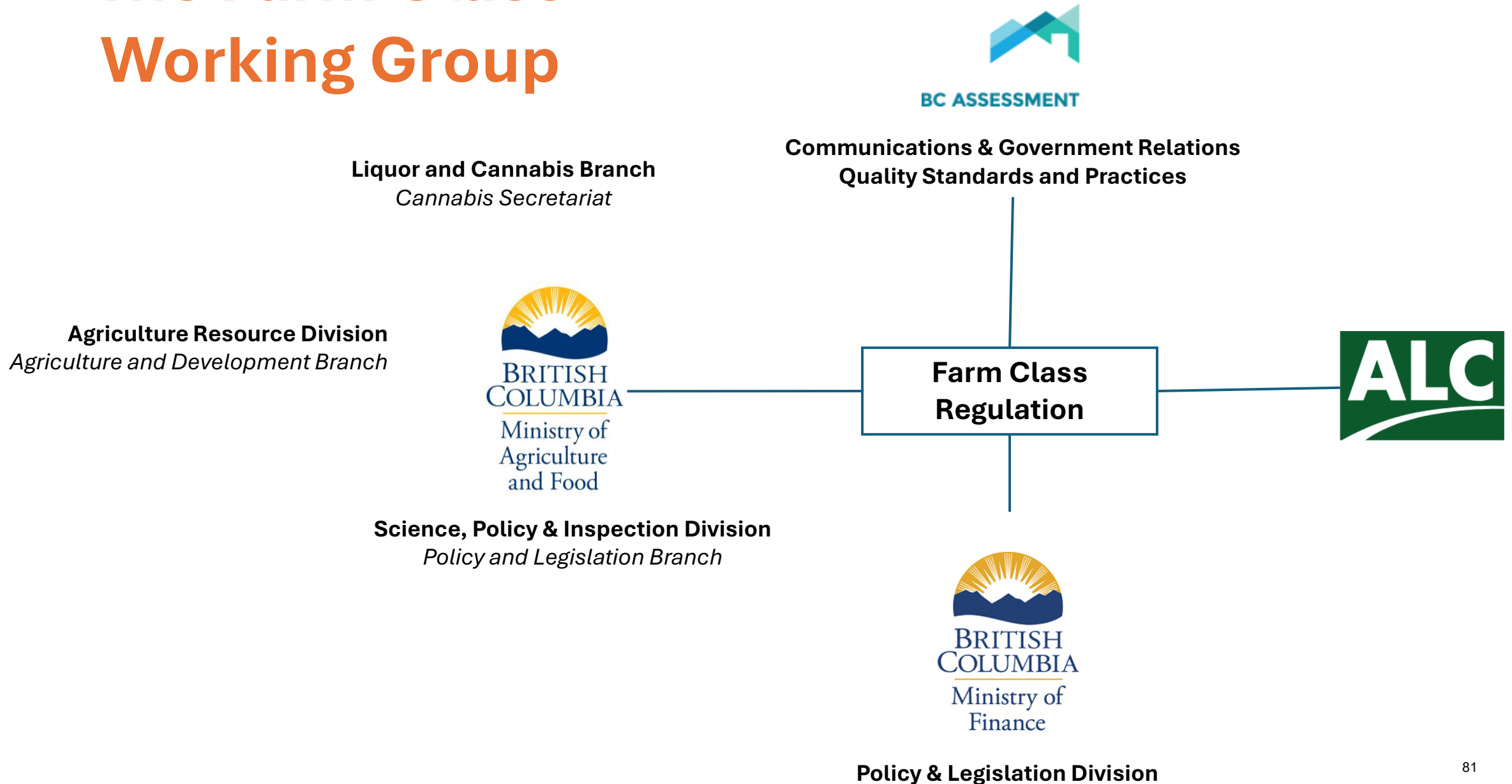
*Includes a review of Qualifying Agricultural Uses – QAUs*

Is the farming **income threshold** the right tool to incentivize economically viable farming?

Is obtaining Farm Class **too easy**?

*Farm Class application process needs to be more robust*

# The Farm Class Working Group



# The Income Threshold Approach and Its Impact Since 1977

## Significant Reduction in Average Farm Size

**1976:** Average farm size 148 acres

**1981:** Average farm size dropped to 73 acres (almost 50% decrease)

## Rapid Increase in Small Farms (<10 Acres)

Between **1976** and **1981**, the number of farms under 10 acres nearly tripled

## Growth in Low-Revenue Farms

**1971–1976:** No significant change in farms earning less than \$2,500/yr

**1977:** Introduction of \$1,600 income threshold

**1976–1981:** Farms earning under \$2,500 doubled (3,223 to 6,415 farms)

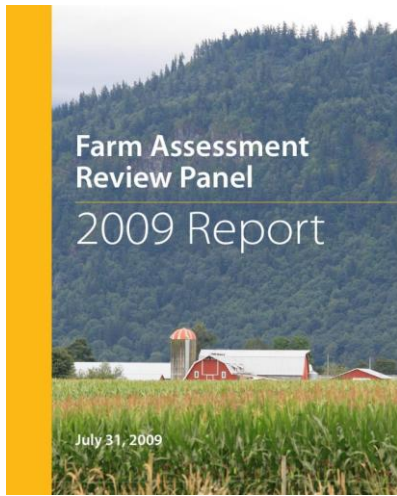
## EVIDENCE OF 'TAX' FARMING: TESTS USING DIFFERENTIAL LAND ASSESSMENTS FOR BC FARMS

### BC farm sizes

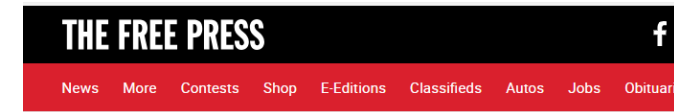
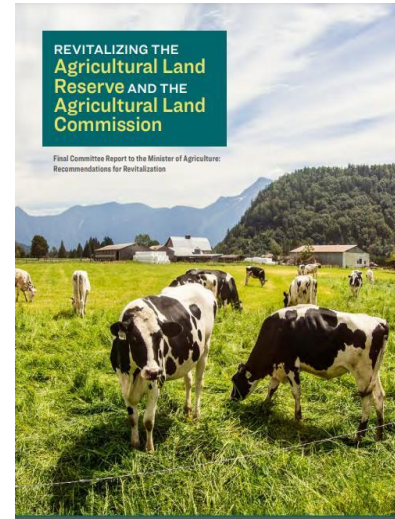
Size in acres	Number of farms		
	1971	1976	1981
0–3	250	257	716
4–9	1367	1669	4525
10–69	4104	4561	7137
70–129	1133	1248	1638
130–179	655	1058	1614
180–239	306	411	531
240–399	757	1089	1205
400–599	525	596	613
600–759	459	595	593
760–1119	547	601	546
1120–1599	342	381	354
1600–over	569	567	540

SOURCE: Census of Agricultural Statistics

# Voices are Getting Louder about the Low Farm Class Income Threshold (2009 – 2024)



## Farm Tax Class Income Threshold Investigation



Home · News

## B.C. city says issue of unused farmland could be solved with 3 tax changes

Recommendations were sent off to UBCM and the LMLGA for further consideration



**MAPLE RIDGE-PITT MEADOWS NEWS**

News More Contests Shop E-Editions Classifieds Autos Jobs Obituaries

### More 'farm' income needed for lower taxes

Too many property owners getting easy ride with farm status

Neil Corbett  
Mar 21, 2014 1:00 PM

More agricultural land in the Lower Mainland might be farmed if cities crack down on property owners who abuse the current rules to avoid paying higher property taxes.

**THE GLOBE AND MAIL\***

### On B.C.'s farmland, mega-mansions and speculators reap the rewards of lucrative tax breaks

**THE ABBOTSFORD NEWS**

### Are tax breaks for hobby farmers driving up the price of agricultural land?

Provincial government hasn't raised farm status threshold for two decades, despite 2009 recommendation to do so.

Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services

### Report on the Budget 2024 Consultation

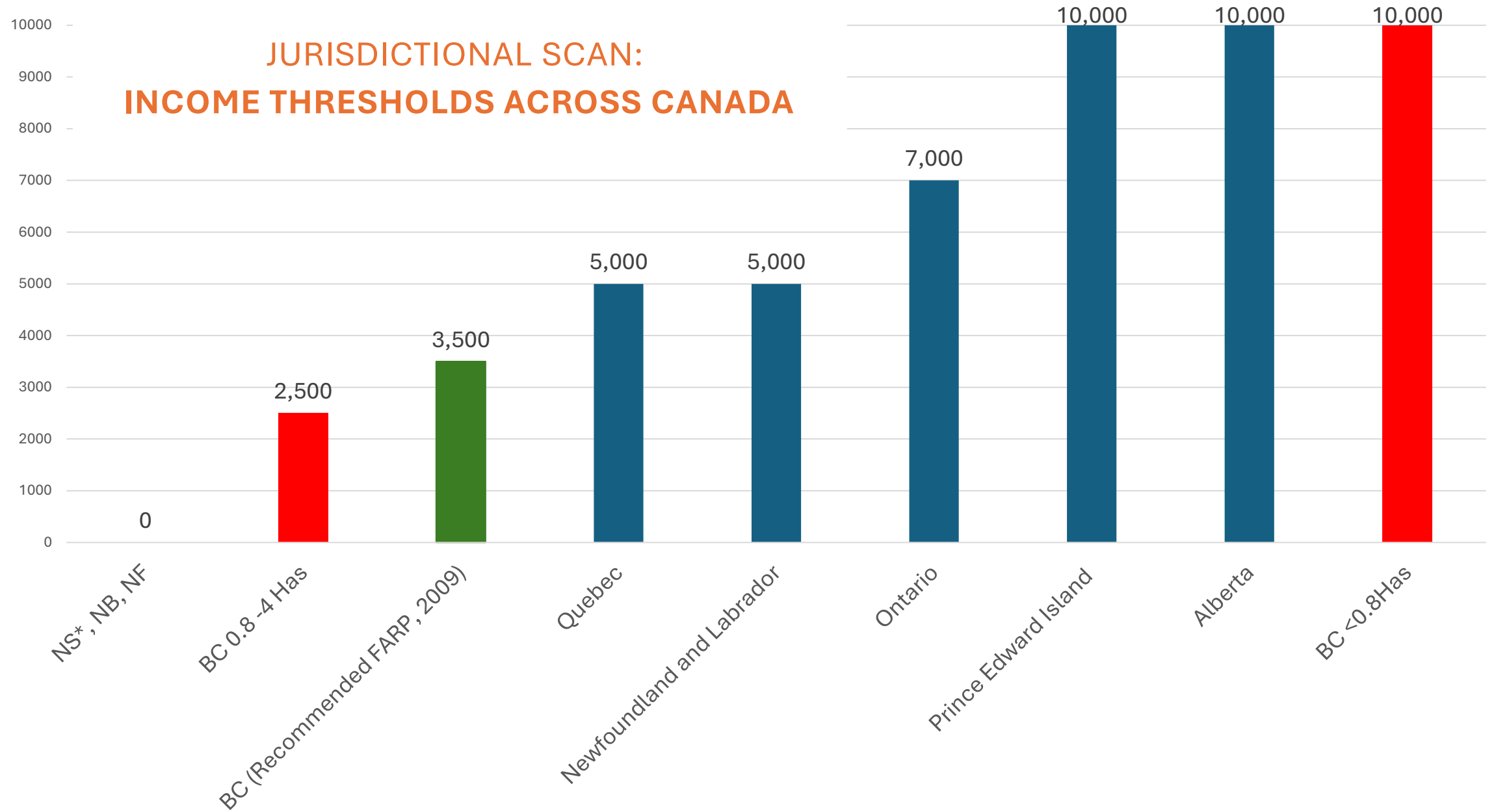
August 2023

**Estimates, B.C. Legislature**  
(April 2024)

**I. Paton:**  
My next question is on farm classification. The B.C. Agriculture Council, as you know, for several years has kicked this idea around, about farm classification. My question to the minister... As it's sitting right now, it's roughly \$2,500 of income to show that you have full farm status. Will the Ministry of Agriculture be looking into raising that farm classification status? They've recommended the figure of \$7,000.

**Hon. P. Alexios:**  
... We are in the early stages of reviewing the dollar value. ...we need to do a much deeper dive and obviously do our consultations with all those that are impacted. But we need to find the correct amount that's appropriate for today's market for sure.

# JURISDICTIONAL SCAN: INCOME THRESHOLDS ACROSS CANADA



# Best Practices learned from Jurisdictional Scan

**Agrologists** conduct and/or assist with farmland valuation assessments:

- **ON:** MPAC assesses the property, Agricorp (Agrologists) determines farm class eligibility, and Local Municipalities designate the appropriate tax rate.
- **SK,** SAMA (Agrologists) conducts land assessments.

**Encouraging Farming and Preserving Farmland - QC:** supports farming by providing technical and financial support

**No income threshold - SK** focuses on **potential** land use (arable and non-arable) rather than specific agricultural uses or products

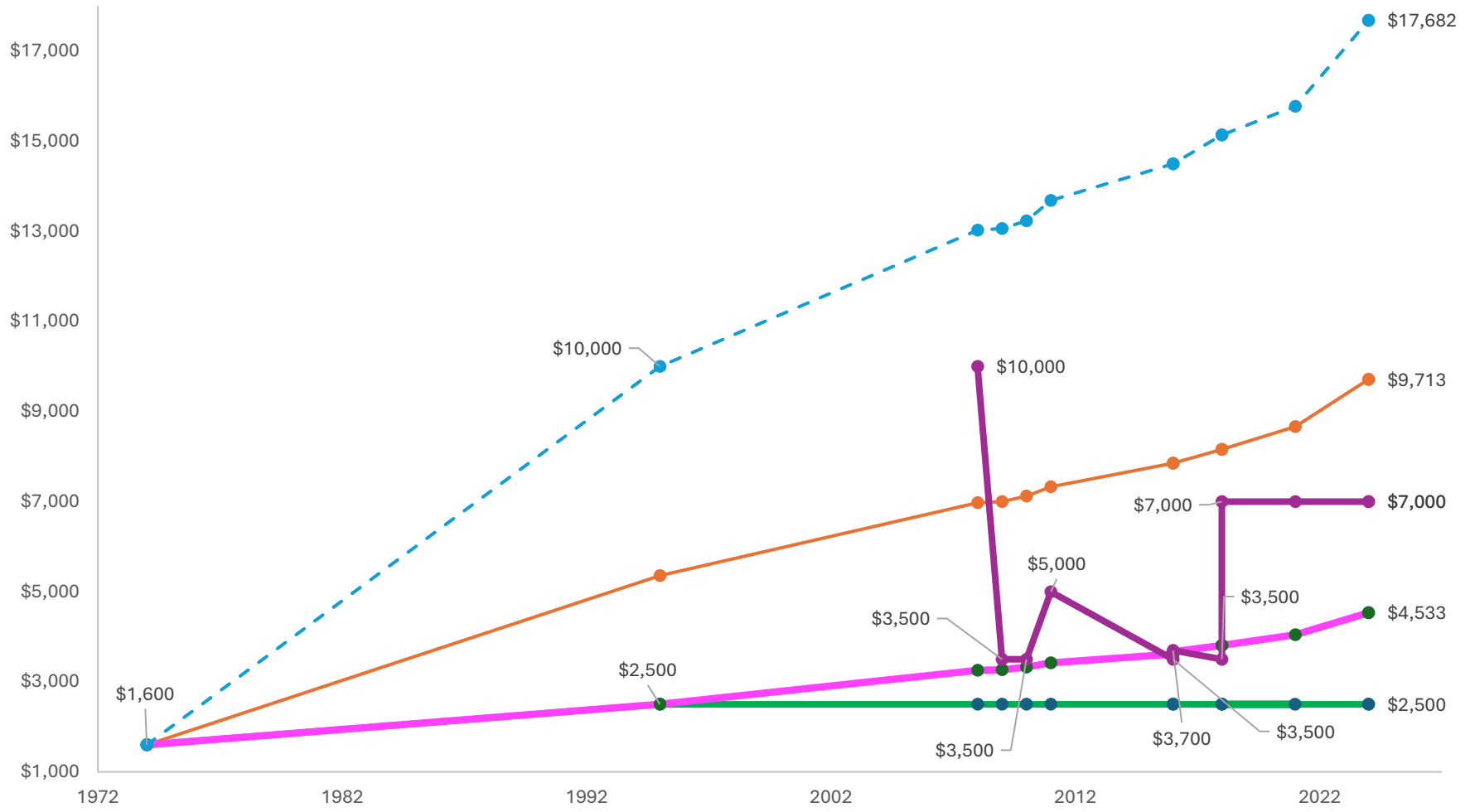
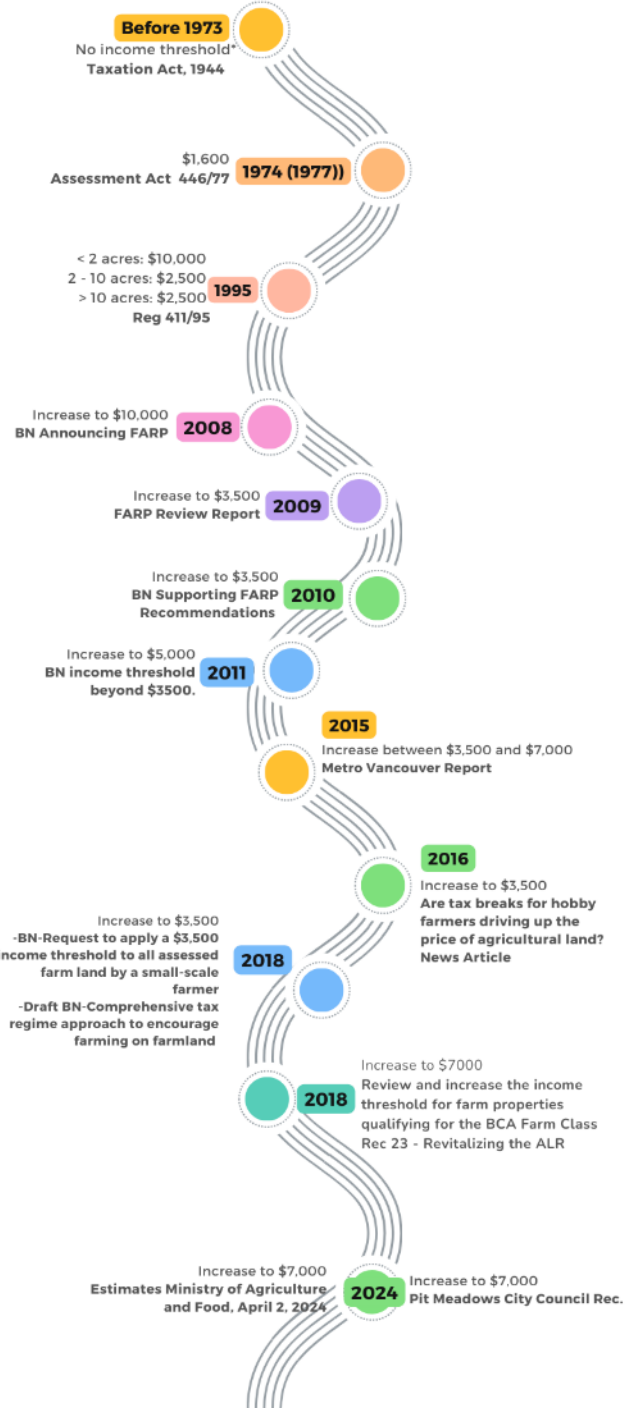
**ON and PEI** use income average to account for years with lower income due to adverse climate or poor markets

**ON, PEI, AB** and **NS** use **CRA** to report farming income

**NS** and **QC** undergoing review farm tax policy

**SK** employs equation to assess land value - includes changing market conditions and climate impact (**evidence-based, factor approach - needs and context**)

# Farm Class Income Threshold Timeline



- Income Threshold
- \$1600 in 1974 corrected to inflation
- \$2500 in 1995 corrected to inflation
- \$10,000 in 1995 corrected to inflation
- Suggested Income Threshold

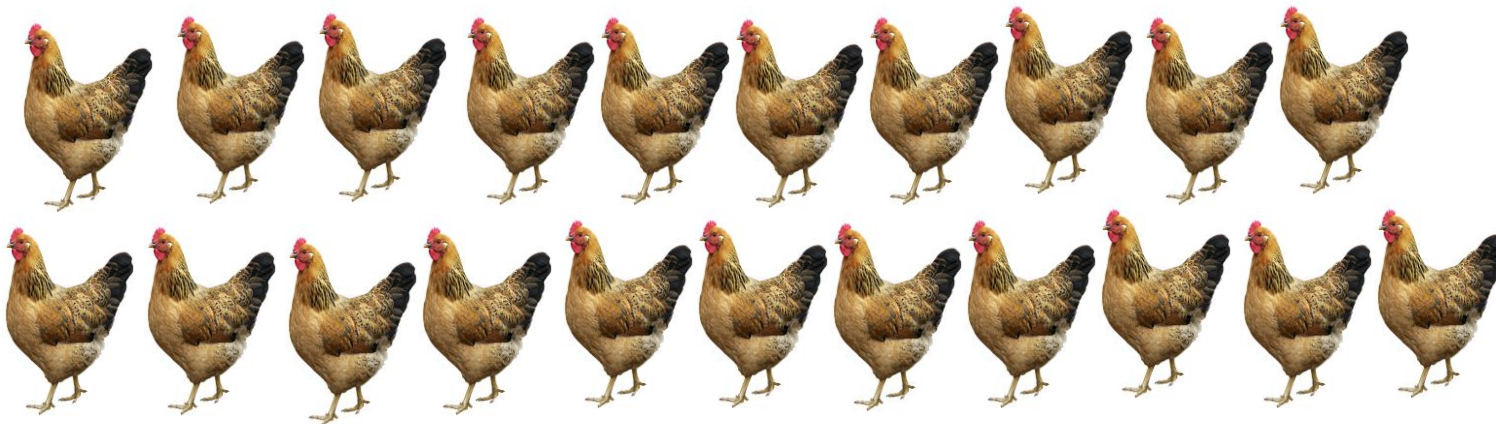
# Understanding Low Productivity Farms: Egg Production in Victoria and the CRD

What does it take to achieve Farm Class designation?

$$\text{\$2,500} / \text{\$7 (dozen)} = 357 \text{ dozen}$$

$$357 \text{ dozen} / 17.3 \text{ (avg. hen production/year)} =$$

A farm needs ~**20 productive hens** to obtain Farm Class



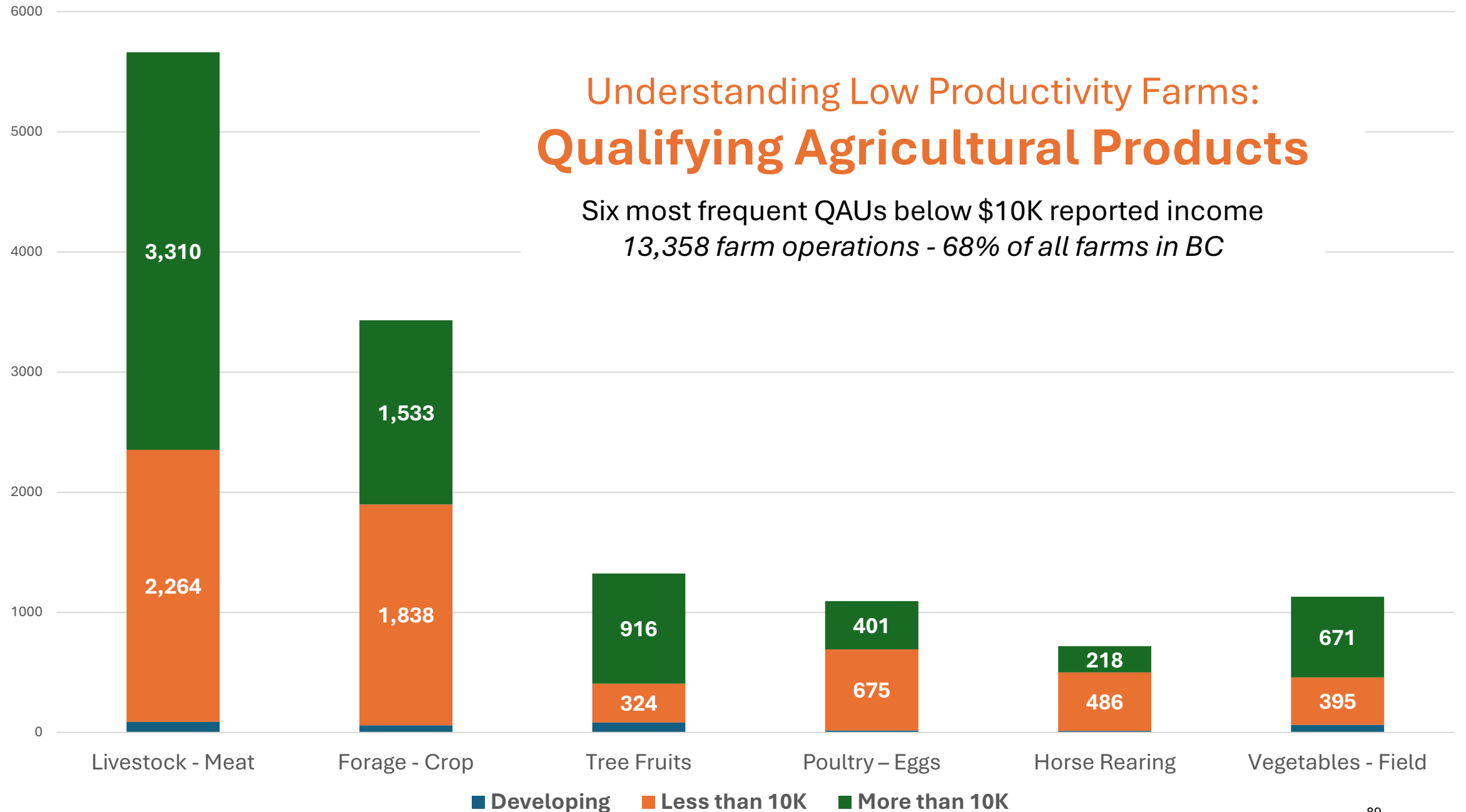
## Understanding Low Productivity Farms: Reported Income by Farm Operations

Reported Income 2023	# of farm operations	%	Developing Farms + Up to \$10K reported income	% Up to 10K
Developing Farms	853	4.34%	8364 farm operations (42.58%)	7511 farm operations (38.24%)
\$2.5K	526	2.68%		
\$2.5 - \$10K	6,985	35.56%		
More than \$10K	11,279	57.42%		
<b>Total</b>	<b>19,643</b>	<b>100%</b>		

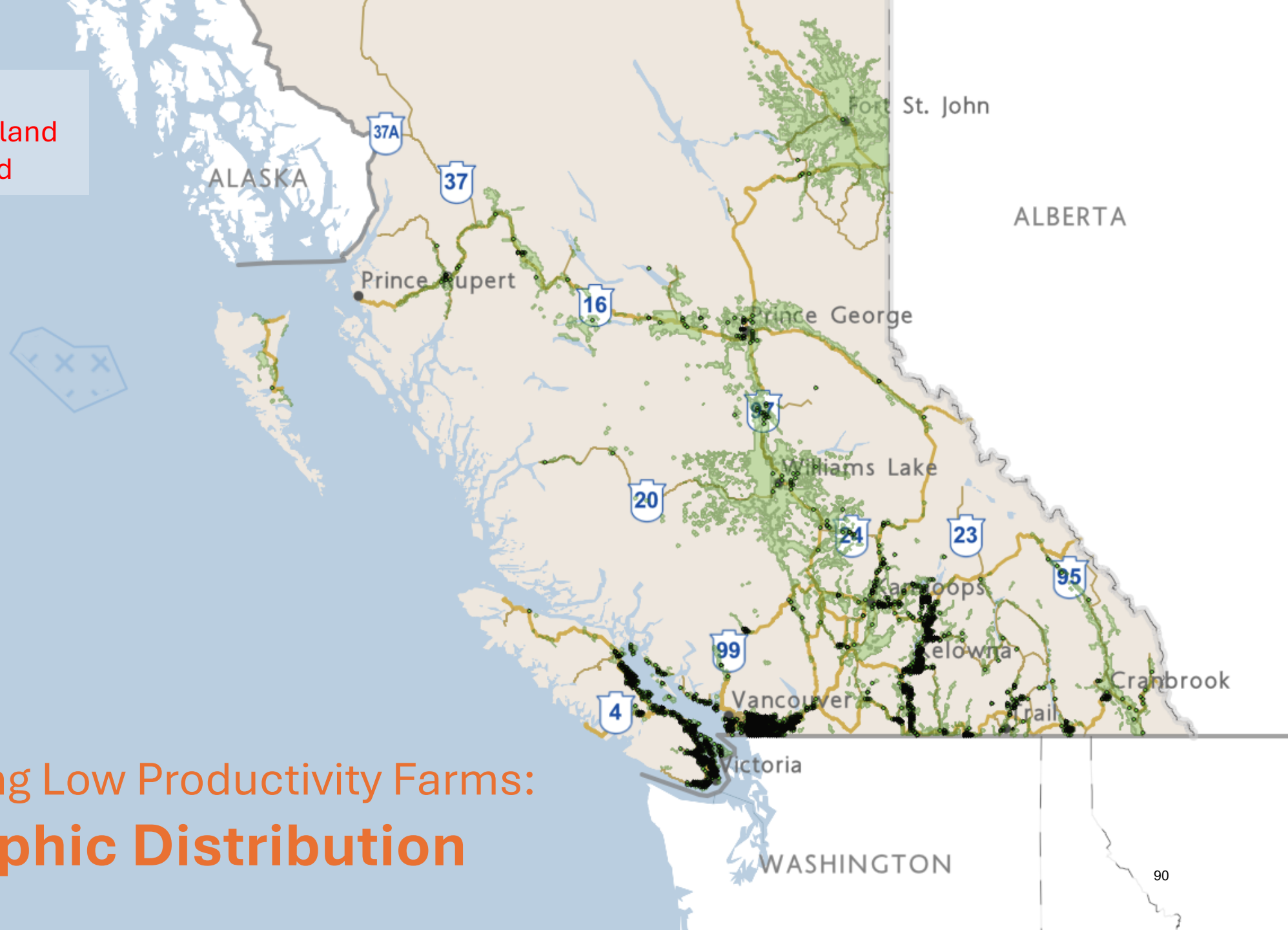
Stats Can Agri Census 2021: **15,841**  
Difference relative to BCA data: **-3,824**

# Understanding Low Productivity Farms: Qualifying Agricultural Products

Six most frequent QAUs below \$10K reported income  
*13,358 farm operations - 68% of all farms in BC*



Concentration in  
Southern Vancouver Island  
and Lower Mainland



Understanding Low Productivity Farms:  
**Geographic Distribution**

# Farm Class 30 Years Later: Unintended Consequences

Low productivity in small-scale farms

Farmland speculation near urban centres (i.e., Metro Vancouver and Southern Vancouver Island)

Abuse of the taxation system (2009 Panel Review – public feedback)

Inflation considerations

Regional differences (north vs south)

Lack of farming knowledge



# Key Challenges with Farm Classification

- **The Regulation (including the threshold) has not been updated in 30 years**
- **BC has the lowest threshold in Canada**
- **Data from BC Assessment indicates that 40% of applicants produce less than \$10,000**
- **Low barrier to entry attracts non-farmers while benefitting from the perks of farm classification**

# Challenges

- Focus on Income threshold limits action and possibilities
- Alignment of the QAU approach with AFs objectives and priorities
- **Upscale** or **downscale** Farm Class Regulation (lever policy vs. tax break incentive)?
- Addressing new approaches to farming in the regulation (regenerative agriculture, greenhouse structures on top of commercial buildings, gardens under solar panels)