

E3

Agriculture

Support and enhance local agriculture and its necessary infrastructure.

Agriculture plays an important role within Surrey. The mild climate, productive soils, extensive farmland, supportive infrastructure and the ability to produce a wide range of crops all contribute to the success of Surrey's farms.

Surrey values protecting its agricultural land and promoting sustainable food systems. For agriculture to survive and thrive in a metropolitan setting, implementing the comprehensive *Surrey Agriculture Protection and Enhancement Strategy* is important in order to appropriately address agricultural-development issues, resolve rural-urban conflicts and ensure long term agriculture viability of agriculture in Surrey.

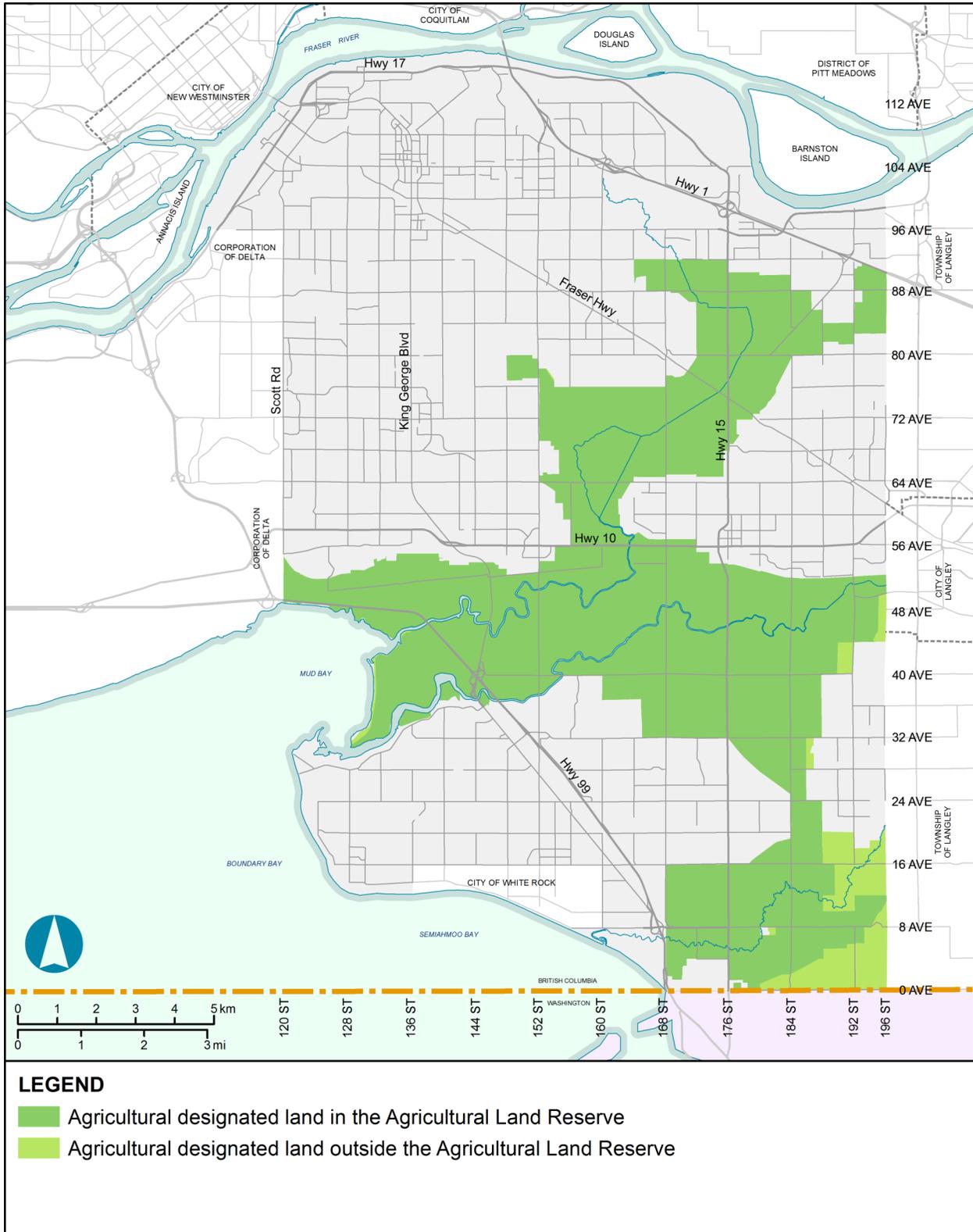
The Agriculture and Food Security Advisory Committee (AFSAC), comprised of representatives from the local agricultural sector, City Council, the Ministry of Agriculture, Surrey's Environmental Advisory Committee and planning and engineering staff, advises Council on agricultural policy and identifies solutions to specific issues ensuring a thriving, sustainable agri-food sector in Surrey.

In order to meet Objective E3, the City will:

E3 POLICIES | GENERAL

- E3.1 Maintain the integrity of the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) and its existing boundaries (see Figure 43).
- E3.2 Ensure all land uses within the Agricultural Land Reserve conform to the policies and regulations of the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* and the *Farm Practices Protection Act* (as amended).
- E3.3 Protect and support the continued designation and use of agricultural land for agricultural purposes regardless of soil types and capabilities. Encourage locating non-soil based agricultural structures on less productive soils, where feasible, in order to fully utilize prime soil resources.
- E3.4 Encourage the continued use of farmland located outside of the ALR for agriculture purposes, subject to the development of an approved secondary plan.
- E3.5 Avoid the fragmentation of ALR lands. Limit the subdivision of land within the ALR to greater than 4 ha (10 ac). Limit the subdivision of designated agriculture land outside the ALR to greater than 2 ha (5 ac). Encourage the amalgamation of lots in agricultural areas.
- E3.6 Require 2 ha of land, within Surrey, of equivalent or better soil capacity, to be included into the ALR for each 1 ha of land excluded from the ALR with the submission of an Agricultural Impact Assessment detailing how this conversion provides a net benefit to agriculture in Surrey.
- E3.7 Ensure that the potential fragmentation of agricultural lands by linear development such as new road construction, hydro corridors or pipeline or road upgrades, does not negatively impact the viability of farm operations or access to farm parcels.

Figure 43:
Agricultural Lands



LEGEND

- Agricultural designated land in the Agricultural Land Reserve
- Agricultural designated land outside the Agricultural Land Reserve

E3 POLICIES | INNOVATION

- E3.8 Maximize the productive utilization of agricultural land through such means as:
- Leasing City-owned ALR land to farmers
 - Amending by-laws, policies and other regulations, as appropriate, to support agricultural production and innovation.
- E3.9 Support Surrey-based research and development of innovative production technologies and practices, such as 'vertical farming', roof-top farming and advanced irrigation and fertilization systems.
- E3.10 Encourage the diversification of agricultural operations and the production of new crops and commodities, particularly high-value crops and those serving new markets with growth potential.
- E3.11 Partner with the Province, producer groups and local businesses to develop new local and global markets and marketing strategies for local commodities.
- E3.12 Encourage innovation in the management and recycling of agriculture and food waste, including waste-to-energy projects in the agri-food sector such as anaerobic digestions and other means of converting waste into a resource.

E3 POLICIES | REDUCE BARRIERS

- E3.13 Support programs that help new farmers overcome financial and other barriers to accessing land (includes but is not limited to incubator farms).



Innovative growing methods can be used to supplement Agricultural Land production.

E3 POLICIES | EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

- E3.14 Work with local secondary and post-secondary institutions to support training and education programs in agriculture and food systems.
- E3.15 Work with post-secondary institutions to facilitate agricultural research partnerships and technology transfer to local farmers.
- E3.16 Support public awareness programs and events to highlight the importance of agriculture to Surrey’s economy. Showcase local producers and increase public awareness of farming practices.

E3 POLICIES | INFRASTRUCTURE

- E3.17 Ensure Surrey has a safe and convenient transportation network that supports agriculture, including access between farms and markets, farm vehicle travel routes and direct access between fields and farm operations.
- E3.18 Support land owners and senior levels of government to improve access to an adequate and safe water supply for agricultural operations such as livestock watering, crop irrigation, produce washing and food processing uses.
- E3.19 Support farming activities by managing stormwater runoff from upland development on agricultural properties in accordance with the Agriculture and Rural Development Subsidiary Agreement (ARDSA) criteria as established by the *Strategic Plan for Lowlands Flood Control*, as amended.
- E3.20 Support the development of ancillary agricultural services necessary for the viability of agricultural operations, in appropriate locations.
- E3.21 Partner with senior levels of government, commodity groups and industry associations to maintain and grow the food packaging and processing industries in Surrey.



Serpentine River used for agricultural irrigation in Surrey.

E3 POLICIES | URBAN-AG INTERFACE

- E3.22 Protect farming and agri-food operations from adjacent urban impacts such as traffic, flooding, nuisance complaints, trespassing and noxious substances.
- E3.23 Protect and enhance the interface between urban areas and the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) by using fencing, landscaping buffers and building separations between urban and agricultural lands, in accordance with DP4 of the Implementation Section of this OCP.
- E3.24 Support density increases in areas adjacent to the ALR, as part of a comprehensively planned neighbourhood, where the required agricultural buffers are widened proportionally to the increase in density (see DP4 of the Implementation Section of this OCP), where cluster housing is used and where natural features such as watercourses, steep slopes, tree preservation, valuable ecosystems and sensitive soils are accommodated.
- E3.25 Support the growth and development of farm markets and stands selling local products directly to consumers.
- E3.26 Carefully plan public areas and recreational trails in areas adjacent to farmland. Provide sufficient separation and physical barriers such as fencing, plantings and topographic features, to reduce conflicts between recreational uses and farming.
- E3.27 Use Agricultural Disclosure Agreements, at various stages of development, adjacent to agricultural areas to increase awareness of owners about the presence and implications of living near agricultural activity.
- E3.28 Raise public awareness and promote and celebrate local agriculture in Surrey through initiatives such as farm tours, media materials, community events, and by encouraging partnerships with producer associations and grocery stores to promote local farm products.
- E3.29 Explore agri-tourism opportunities for producers to diversify their farm operations, create an identifiable brand, and sell more products and services directly to consumers.

Agricultural-Urban landscape buffer are used to reduce conflicts between these two uses.



E3 POLICIES | ENVIRONMENT

- E3.30 Encourage sound environmental agricultural and farm practices by working with farmers to participate in the Provincial Environmental Farm Plan program in order to promote clean and healthy air, water and soils.
- E3.31 Encourage the management and recycling of manure and agricultural wastes in a sustainable manner.
- E3.32 Support programs and opportunities that help support pollinators and their valuable role in the continued viability of farming operations.
- E3.33 Encourage Best Management Practices for riparian areas and streams in agricultural areas in order to support fish populations in accordance with the requirements of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) and the Provincial *Water Act*, as amended.
- E3.34 Explore opportunities related to recovering heat, generating clean energy and other resources and reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by recycling food wastes and other organic materials through pilot projects and partnerships.



Farm areas are clearly defined in Surrey's Agricultural Land Reserve.