

***REVISED PROCESS RELATED TO THE
PLANTING OF LANDSCAPED BUFFERS
FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS
ADJACENT TO THE ALR/AGRICULTURAL
DESIGNATION EFFECTIVE
MAY 22, 2007***

Agriculture is a prominent land use in Surrey and a vital component of the local economy. Continuing growth of the City creates the potential for land use conflicts along the boundaries of Agricultural areas.

In order to minimize urban encroachment on agricultural land and farming activities, most sites that are adjacent to the Agricultural designation are required to obtain a Development Permit before subdivision or development. The City of Surrey Official Community Plan (OCP) contains guidelines related to the planting of a continuous landscaped buffer between any development and the agricultural land. At the time of development, Restrictive Covenants are registered on lots adjacent to the agricultural designation to ensure that landscape buffers are completed and maintained.

When buffers are not planted, conflicts between residential and agricultural uses may arise. Homeowners may unknowingly use the buffer for other purposes. Construction of the buffer following occupancy can impact the enjoyment of property and lead to unnecessary disruption. To alleviate these concerns, the Surrey Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC) has suggested that the planting of buffers be reviewed. On December 18, 2006, Surrey City Council adopted the following motion:

"That Council direct Staff to review the process and implementation of the agricultural buffer plantings and to ensure that the planting is being done and maintained." (RES.R06-2963)

Effective, **May 22, 2007**, landscaped buffers will now be required to be installed prior to the issuance of building permits related to new residential subdivisions and developments. This requirement will apply to all residential developments that are adjacent to the ALR/agricultural designation (where a Development Permit is required). In-stream development applications will continue to be subject to the previous procedure for the installation of buffers in instances where, before the effective date:

- Council has authorized staff to draft an agricultural buffer development permit;
- A Preliminary Layout Approval (PLA) has been issued (for applications involving a subdivision); and
- A Restrictive Covenant has been approved by the City.

This revised process will result in new developments having agricultural buffers being planted by the responsible agent before occupancy by the homeowner or other end user. This is expected to contribute to compatibility between agricultural and residential land uses, while minimizing disruption to property.

For further information, please contact the Planning and Development Department at 604-591-4441.

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