

July, 2016  
PLANNING DEPARTMENT

# ***ADDITIONAL DWELLINGS IN THE AGRICULTURAL LAND RESERVE (ALR)***

**THIS PAMPHLET IS FOR GENERAL GUIDANCE ONLY.  
IT DOES NOT REPLACE BY-LAWS OR OTHER LEGAL DOCUMENTS**

This bulletin is intended to provide information on the Planning and Development Department process for additional dwellings proposed in the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR).

## **What is the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR)?**

The [ALR](#) is a Provincial zone in which agriculture is recognized as the priority use. Farming is encouraged and non-farm uses, such as residential dwellings, are restricted. The ALR is administered by the [Agricultural Land Commission](#) (ALC), under the legislative authority of the Agricultural Land Commission Act (ALCA), and [Agricultural Land Reserve Use, Subdivision and Procedure Regulations](#).

## **How many dwellings may be permitted per parcel in the ALR?**

- One single family dwelling is permitted on a parcel of land in the ALR. One secondary suite for residential purposes, wholly contained within the single family dwelling may also be permitted in the City of Surrey.
- In addition, one manufactured home up to 9 meters wide for use by the owner's immediate family member(s) or a farm worker may be permitted on a parcel of land greater than 10 Acres as a second dwelling in the General Agriculture (A-1) and Intensive Agriculture (A-2) Zones.

[ALC Policy #8](#) further explains the ALR Regulations for permitted residential uses in the ALR.

## **Are additional dwellings allowed in the ALR?**

Any additional permanent dwelling (such as second single family dwelling or a duplex) proposed for an immediate family member, or someone who is not a farm worker necessary for the farm/ranch operation, is not a permitted use in the ALR.

An additional permanent dwelling (single family or duplex) or a second manufactured home for farm/ranch worker accommodation may be permitted in the ALR if it is necessary for farm use (farm help). [ALC Policy #9](#) further explains ALC Act requirements for additional residences for farm help accommodation in the ALR.

## Can I apply to the City for additional dwellings in the ALR?

In order for the City of Surrey to permit the construction of an additional permanent residence (second single family dwelling or a duplex) proposed for Farm Worker(s), an application to the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) for approval under Section 20 (3) of the ALCA is required. The permission for non-farm use will be considered by the ALC following a referral of the application to the ALC from Surrey City Council.

If the application is referred by the City and approval from the ALC is granted, and only for properties that are a minimum of 4 hectares (10 acres) in size that are a farm operation, an additional single family dwelling or a duplex is permissible as a second dwelling in Surrey's General Agriculture (A-1) and Intensive Agriculture (A-2) Zones if the parcel has 'farm' classification under the [Assessment Act](#).

## How do I know if my property is located in the ALR?

The ALC website ([www.alc.gov.bc.ca](http://www.alc.gov.bc.ca)) has a tool that identifies properties located in the ALR. Additionally, the City's COSMOS online mapping system (<http://cosmos.surrey.ca>) has a map layer that shows the Agricultural Land Reserve. This layer is located in the "Layers and Legend" tab, in the yellow Land Use / Environment folder on the left side of COSMOS.

## OVERVIEW OF THE APPLICATION PROCESS FOR ADDITIONAL RESIDENCES IN THE ALR

### **Step 1: Plan Your Application**

- Verify if your property is located within the ALR and is zoned either A-1 or A-2.
- Confirm that your property is a minimum of 4 hectares (10 acres) in size and is considered a farm operation. (A farm operation means one or more lots being used for agriculture use which is classified as a farm under the [BC Assessment Act](#), R.S.B.C. 1996, and is managed as a single farm.)
- Ensure and provide evidence that the additional residence is necessary for the accommodation of bona-fide farm/ranch worker(s) necessary for the farm/ranch business, and that a certain level of existing employment is already taking place on the farm operation.
- When deciding upon a location for an additional dwelling, consider the farm residential footprint and the maximum setback requirements of the A-1 and A-2 Zones.
- An ALR related soil permit may also be required for additional dwellings, where more than 0.2 Ha (1/2 acre) of land is proposed to be disturbed by deposition of soil, which also requires approval from the (ALC), see [ALC Policy #19](#) for more details.

### **Step 2: Submit Your Non-Farm Use Application Form Using ALC Application Portal**

- To submit a Non-Farm Use Application to the ALC you must sign into the [ALC Application Portal](#), on the ALC website ([www.alc.gov.bc.ca](http://www.alc.gov.bc.ca)), using a [BCeID account](#).
- Once you have completed and submitted the application, the City of Surrey will be notified that an application has been submitted.
- After you have submitted an online application, you will receive an email with instructions to contact the City and pay the Non-Farm Use application fee (\$1,500) to the City of Surrey.
- The City will wait to process an application until payment is received.
- City of Surrey Planning and Development staff will access your application material within the Application Portal in order to process the application.

### **Step 3: Application Review**

- Upon completing an online application and receiving payment for the application, all Non-Farm Use and/or Non-Farm Use Soil applications for an additional dwelling(s) will be sent electronically to the City.
- A file number will be given to the application and the file will be assigned to a City Planner.
- Planning & Development staff will review your application and may request additional supporting documentation as necessary, such as information that demonstrates the proposed additional residence is necessary for farm operations. [Examples of evidence could be supplied by a T4 slip and/or Record of Employment (ROE) and/or by an accountant's letter stating that the incomes of the occupant of the principle dwelling and the Farm Employee are generated from the farm operation.]
- The application will be referred to the Agriculture and Food Security Advisory Committee (AFSAC) for comment.
- Planning staff will prepare and send a Planning Report to City Council with recommendation as to whether or not Council should refer the application to the ALC.
- During a Regular Council – Land Use meeting, City Council will decide whether or not to refer the application to the ALC. This step is required before the ALC will consider a non-farm use application.

### **Step 4: Referral to the ALC**

- If City Council decides to refer the application to the ALC, the application will be forwarded to the ALC Board for consideration with or without comment. Forwarding an application to the ALC should not be construed as an approval.
- The ALC will review and assess the proposal. The ALC may request additional information.
- The ALC makes a decision on the proposal and communicates the decision in writing to the applicant and to the City.

### **Step 5: Building Permit Application**

- If the ALC supports the proposed additional residence(s), a [building permit application](#) and if applicable any related [soil permit application](#) for the additional dwelling(s) can be processed by the City, subject to the City Zoning regulations such as building siting and setback requirements.

For further information on applying to construct an additional dwelling in the ALR in Surrey, contact the:

- Planning and Development Department at City Hall  
13450 – 104 Avenue, Surrey, BC  
604-591-4441  
[planningdevelopment@surrey.ca](mailto:planningdevelopment@surrey.ca)
- Agricultural Land Commission (ALC)  
133, 4940 - Canada Way, Burnaby, BC  
604-660-7000  
[ALCBurnaby@victoria.gov.bc.ca](mailto:ALCBurnaby@victoria.gov.bc.ca)