



A GUIDE TO AGRICULTURAL IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

The agricultural sector in Pitt Meadows can be affected by a variety of non-agricultural activities. The City of Pitt Meadows seeks to reduce potential impacts on agriculture by requiring Agricultural Impact Assessments (AIAs) to accompany development proposals on or near agricultural lands. The AIA will help to identify potential impacts and necessary mitigation measures to preserve the value and integrity of agricultural lands.

The City's Official Community Plan (OCP) and Agricultural Viability Strategy (AVS) outline goals and policies to maintain the agricultural land base of Pitt Meadows and promote sustainable agriculture.

Note that a security may be required as part of the Farmland Protection Development Permit to ensure that the proposed mitigation measures are implemented as proposed.

Components of an Agricultural Impact Assessment

An AIA must be conducted by a registered Professional Agrologist with experience in preparing AIAs. The assessment must include a written report submitted to the City that addresses the following components:

Development Proposal and Scope:

- Identify the type of application and describe the proposal, including a site plan and a plan showing the site in the context of the surrounding area.
- Describe the current use and agricultural capacity of the land under application and the neighbouring lands. Include proximity to farmland, current ALR status, and farm tenure to assess existing agricultural viability.
- Evaluate the compatibility of the proposed non-farm use within an agricultural area and its potential to cause direct and/or indirect impacts.

Potential Project Impacts:



This guide is not a bylaw. It is a guide prepared to assist you in preparing an Agricultural Impact Assessment for the City of Pitt Meadows. For details and legal documents, you must consult relevant bylaws and provincial legislation.

Planning &
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Hours: 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
(Monday to Friday)

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- Floodplain and Drainage Impacts - Identify potential drainage and floodplain impacts that could lead to flooding, erosion, or siltation damage. Include how existing drainage patterns and floodplain capacity will be affected, and explain how road property drainage and sediment control will be managed to prevent impacts on adjacent lands.
 - Water Impacts - Assess potential downstream surface water, irrigation, septic and groundwater impacts on neighbouring lands. If risks are identified for surrounding wells or aquifers, propose mitigation measures. For developments utilizing septic systems and/or wells, a separate Groundwater Impact Assessment may be required.
 - Soil Movement Impacts – Consider topsoil loss and compaction, affecting crop productivity via equipment, hauling, and amendment. Refer to *Soil Deposit and Removal Bylaw No. 3000, 2024*.
 - Noise Impacts – Consider the noise levels generated by the proposal and their potential effects on agricultural operations.
 - Air Quality Impacts - Describe the type, volume, and concentration of air emissions the proposal will generate and their potential effects on crops, animals and neighbouring properties.
 - Traffic Impacts – Assess traffic impacts, including the need for new roads or rural road upgrades, restrictions on farm vehicle movement, impacts on field access, safety concerns from increased traffic volumes and speeds, and the effects of road run-off or pesticide use along roads. Consider farm vehicle movement conflicts during seasonal operations, and dust generation from increased traffic that may impact crops and livestock. Refer to *Highway and Traffic Bylaw No. 2836* for rural road use and truck routes.
 - Infrastructure and Servicing Impacts - Describe potential impacts on agricultural lands resulting from the proposal, including water, sewer, storm drainage, and utilities. Consider utility corridor placement that may fragment farmland or restrict access. Consider temporary construction access routes impacting soil and field operations. Refer to *Subdivision and Development Servicing Bylaw No. 2589* for subdivision design and development considerations.

Compliance with OCP, AVS, and Provincial Guidelines:

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- Refer to the Farmland Protection Development Permit guidelines in the OCP and describe how the project will meet the site guidelines, building construction guidelines, and landscaping guidelines.
 - Refer to the AVS and describe how the project will help protect farmland for farming, plan and manage infrastructure to support agriculture, support the economic viability of agriculture, adapt to future challenges and help the community support agriculture.
 - Refer to the Ministry of Agriculture and Food's *Guide to Edge Planning* and *Subdivision Near Agriculture* and describe how the project will incorporate the recommendations within these guides.

Mitigation Measures:

- Propose interface edge planning, with recommended landscape buffer zones, building setbacks, fencing to mitigate impacts to neighbouring agricultural properties and minimize conflict to addressing issues like crop theft, animal harassment, trespassing, vandalism, and restrictions on agricultural activities due to noise or spray drift.
- Prepare soil management plans to preserve the agricultural soil quality.
- Recommend restrictive covenants for setback areas, or to notify future owners of nearby farm practices and potential disruptions (noise, odour, spraying).
- Suggest improvements to irrigation/drainage, farm road access, and infrastructure servicing aligned with City policies. Implement Low Impact Development (LID) strategies for stormwater near farmland.
- Consider timing of construction to avoid peak agricultural activity.
- Identify and minimize potential indirect and longer-term use impacts relating to invasive plant species being introduced through non-farm landscaping and yard waste, and bear and predator pattern impacts (e.g. waste management concerns and/or travel corridor changes).

Summary and Conclusion:

- Summarize remaining impacts after mitigation and assess whether they are acceptable.

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- Provide recommendations to proceed, modify, or reject the development proposal based on agricultural viability and policy compliance.

Links:

[Agriculture in Pitt Meadows](#)

[Pitt Meadows Zoning Bylaw 2505, 2011](#)

[Pitt Meadows Official Community Plan](#)

[MAF Guide to Edge Planning](#)

[MAF Subdivision Near Agriculture](#)

[Agricultural Impact Assessment Guidelines – Metro Vancouver Draft Subdivision and Development Servicing Bylaw No. 2589, Consolidated](#)

[Highway and Traffic Bylaw No. 2836, 2020](#)

[Soil Deposit and Removal Bylaw No. 3000, 2024](#)