
From: Council Reports
Subject: FW: Agricultural Land Reserve: Legislative & Policy Update - White Pages
Attachments: UBCM_Provincial_InTheHouse_18November2011.pdf

From: Mary Jane Drouin [mailto:maryjane.drouin@cord.bc.ca]
Sent: November 18, 2011 4:31 PM
To: Regional Board; rhobson@shaw.ca
Subject: Agricultural Land Reserve: Legislative & Policy Update

For your information...

Mary Jane

Please find attached a communication piece that is being forwarded to inform local governments about recent legislative and policy changes that the provincial government has introduced regarding the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC).

If your local government has any questions regarding this communication, please contact Ken Vance, Senior Policy Advisor at kvance@ubcm.ca or phone (604)270-8226 ext. 114.

This advisory is provided through a distribution system that is maintained and monitored by UBCM. To change or update the contact information for your organization, please contact radamson@ubcm.ca.



Provincial Legislation 2011

This communication is being forwarded to inform local governments about recent legislative and policy changes that the provincial government has introduced regarding the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC).

Agricultural Land Commission Legislative & Policy Update

Legislative Changes – Bill 19 – Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act (No. 3)

The proposed legislation amends the Agricultural Land Commission Act to give the chief executive officer:

- the authority to refuse an application which has previously been considered by the commission within the past 5 years and been refused. The legislative change would place a 5-year moratorium on repeat applications to the ALC.
- the authority to request that the executive committee reconsider a decision made by a panel to ensure fairness, transparency and consistency in the decision-making process. The legislative change would provide greater oversight of panel decisions to ensure they meet the provincial objectives of preserving farms and expanding opportunities for producers.
- the authority to charge service fees for reviewing applications forwarded to the ALC. The intent would be to provide additional resources to the ALC to encourage land use

planning and other measures to promote farming in local communities.

The proposed legislation is posted at:
www.leg.bc.ca/39th4th/1st_read/gov19-1.htm

Policy Changes

The province has indicated that it is undertaking the following policy changes to further improve the operations of the ALC and enhance farming:

Sustainable Operations: An additional \$1.6 million provides the ALC with resources to transition to a more self-supporting operating model by 2013. The proposed legislation would also allow the ALC to charge service fees to augment provincial funding. The fee structure will be set by provincial regulation following consultation with producers, local governments and other stakeholders.

Increased Enforcement: The Province has already increased the number of provincial government officials authorized to investigate and respond to ALR violations to approximately 30 through coordinated multi-ministry enforcement. The proposed legislation would further expand enforcement by allowing qualified officials from other government agencies and levels of government to conduct enforcement activities.

Strategic Governance: The recruitment of a chief executive officer (CEO) for the ALC is underway. The CEO will lead the ALC's evolution into a sustainably structured organization. The proposed legislation would also enable the chair of the ALC to have greater oversight of regional panels to ensure fairness, transparency and consistency in the decision-making process.

Upgraded Information Services: Government ministries and agencies are already working to improve the ALC's business processes and information management capacity through its online application tracking system. Upon completion, this effort will provide enhanced web services to clients through full integration with the Province's online mapping database and interactive tools.

Encouraging Farming: These changes will free up resources to allow the Province and the ALC to be more proactive in their work with local governments to encourage agriculture in their land use plans, bylaws and policies, and to promote agriculture, farm diversification and value-added processing in their communities.

A New Minister's Bylaw Standard: The Minister of Agriculture has developed a new standard to guide local government bylaw development in farming areas and a letter has been sent to local governments requesting them to review their bylaws to determine if they address the new standards. The bylaw standard provides local governments with a ready-to-use model that restricts building large residential homes in the centre of ALR lots and ensures the majority of the land is preserved for agricultural use. The resulting standard follows extensive consultation with local governments, agriculture producers, stakeholders and the general public.

The Minister's Bylaw Standard is entitled "Regulating the Siting and Size of Residential Uses in ALR" and is posted at:

www.agf.gov.bc.ca/resmgmt/sf/residential_uses_in_ALR_consultation/residential_uses_index.htm

UBCM Contact

If your local government has any questions regarding this communication, please contact Ken Vance, Senior Policy Advisor. He can be reached either by email at: kvance@ubcm.ca, or phone 604-270-8226 ext. 114.