

5.5 AGRICULTURE LARGE HOLDINGS POLICY AREA

The primary intent of the Agriculture Large Holdings Policy Area identified on Map 2: Rural Service Area is to support and promote the development of extensive agricultural operations on large unfragmented lands and to provide for limited commercial and residential uses that support these operations.

The vast majority of the land in the Agriculture Large Holdings Policy Area is devoted to agricultural operations, and most of the land is under cultivation. The Agriculture Large Holdings Policy Area has been delineated by the high quality soils in the area. These prime and unique farmlands support a wide range of field crops, as well as a diversity of specialty crops.

► Goal

Strathcona County will provide opportunities for agricultural operations and homesteads that respect rural landscape and the environment.

► Objectives

Strathcona County's objectives are to **ensure** that the Agricultural Large Holdings Policy Area:

1. *Prioritizes extensive agricultural operations;*
2. *Provides opportunities for livestock operations;*
3. *Includes large, contiguous tracts of land with minimal fragmentation;*
4. *Provides opportunities for livework, local food production and local food distribution;*
5. *Is viable over the long term; and*
6. *Respects rural landscapes, natural landscapes and heritage.*



Policies Strathcona County Will



Agriculture

Promote the prioritization of extensive agricultural operations by **encouraging**:

1. the development of extensive agricultural operations.

Ensure opportunities for livestock operations by **requiring**:

2. participation by the County, as an interested party under, and in connection with all applications, hearings and appeals for confined feeding operations occurring within Strathcona County that have been submitted to the Natural Resources Conservation Board.



Promote opportunities for livestock operations by **encouraging**:

3. the development of livestock operations.

Support opportunities for livestock operations by **considering**:

4. new confined feeding operations where the property line of the proposed development:
 - a. is located at least 3.2 kilometres (2.0 miles) from the property line, of any:
 - i. City, Urban Service Area, Hamlet or Town;
 - ii. area already developed or that is designated for uses such as schools, hospitals, commercial or multi-parcel country residential; and
 - iii. federal, provincial or municipal park or recreation area, and any other areas used or intended to be developed for recreational facilities; and
 - b. is located at least 1.0 kilometre (0.62 miles) from the boundary of an environmentally significant area.
5. the continued operation and expansion of existing confined feeding operations in accordance with the *Agricultural Operation Practices Act*.

Ensure large, contiguous tracks of land with minimal fragmentation by **requiring**:

6. that subdivision for agricultural purposes be limited to a first parcel out of an unsubdivided quarter section that is:
 - a. an equal split; or
 - b. a split along a natural or manmade severance.

Support opportunities for livework, local food production and local food distribution by **considering**:

7. the development of small and medium scale indoor agriculture where the development:
 - a. mitigates environmental impacts;
 - b. mitigates nuisance impacts on adjacent land uses; and
 - c. has levels of infrastructure which meet the requirements of municipal and provincial standards and regulations.

Promote respect for rural landscapes, natural landscapes and heritage by **encouraging**:

8. the development of equine and equestrian facilities.



Residential

Support opportunities for livestock operations by **considering**:

9. the location of approved, confined feeding operation facilities and their ability to expand when locating new residential parcels.

Ensure large, contiguous tracts of land with minimal fragmentation by **requiring**:

10. that subdivision for residential purposes be limited to a first parcel out of an unsubdivided quarter section that is:
 - a. a split along a natural or manmade severance;
 - b. a parcel for an existing residence; or
 - c. a parcel for a proposed residence.
11. the following with regards to residential subdivision:
 - a. the size of a residential parcel shall be limited to the amount of land required to include a residential yardsite;

- b. residential parcels shall be configured to avoid panhandles and irregular shapes; and
- c. the location of the residential parcel shall consider the topography and physical features of the quarter section.

Ensure opportunities for livework, local food production and local food distribution by **requiring**:

12. that residential forms are limited to single dwellings and associated accessory buildings or collective communal housing supporting the primary agricultural use of the parcel.



Commercial

Ensure the prioritization of extensive agricultural operations by **requiring**:

13. large scale agriculture support services and agricultural product processing to develop in identified and comprehensively planned business centres in the Heartland Policy Area, Local Employment Policy Area and the Urban Service Area.

Prime and unique farmlands support a wide range of field crops, as well as a diversity of specialty crops.



Promote opportunities for livework, local food production and local food distribution by **encouraging**:

14. small scale nature-based and agri-tourism where the development is on a parcel with an existing dwelling, covers a small land area and has limited onsite environmental impacts which are mitigated.

Support opportunities for livework, local food production and local food distribution by **considering**:

15. small scale agricultural support services, agricultural product processing and associated sales where the development:
 - a. mitigates environmental impacts;
 - b. mitigates nuisance impacts on adjacent land uses; and
 - c. has levels of infrastructure which meet the requirements of municipal and provincial standards and regulations.

16. home-based businesses where the proposed development:
 - a. is limited to the residence or accessory buildings; or
 - b. is related to, or serves the agricultural community; and
 - c. has levels of infrastructure which meet the requirements of municipal and provincial standards and regulations.
17. large and medium scale agri-tourism where the proposed development:
 - a. is on a parcel with an existing dwelling;
 - b. mitigates environmental impacts;
 - c. is rezoned to a district consistent with the objectives and policies of the applicable policy area;
 - d. is compatible with adjacent land uses; and
 - e. has levels of infrastructure which meet the requirements of municipal and provincial standards and regulations.



Open Space, Community Services and Schools

Ensure large, contiguous tracts of land with minimal fragmentation by **requiring**:

18. municipal reserves as parks and active transportation infrastructure only where the land is needed to provide the desired linkages within the County's approved Active Transportation Strategy.

Ensure viability over the long term by **requiring**:

19. new local community services and schools which service the Agricultural Large Holdings Area to locate in the Urban Service Area, Josephburg or Ardrossan.



POLICY 15

Support respect for rural landscapes, natural landscapes and heritage by **considering**:

20. a regional park primarily for outdoor recreation that meets one or more of the following:
 - a. is in close proximity (800m) to the North Saskatchewan River Valley;
 - b. is in close proximity to the Trans Canada Trail and the River Valley Alliance Trail Network; or
 - c. provides the desired linkages within the County's approved Active Transportation Strategy.



Conservation

Promote respect for rural landscapes, natural landscapes and heritage by **encouraging**:

21. developments to retain the natural topography of a parcel by conserving environmental features, with special consideration given to areas identified within a biophysical assessment.
22. developments to retain tree stands where the trees:
 - a. do not inhibit an agricultural operation; or
 - b. provide protection for watercourses or other environmental features.
23. the retention of wetlands through avoidance or minimization.

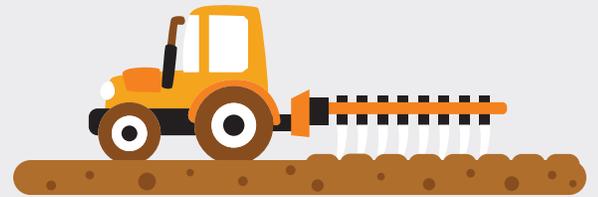


Industry and Energy

Promote large, contiguous tracts of land with minimal fragmentation by **encouraging**:

24. pipelines to locate within the alignments shown on Map 11: Pipeline Corridors.
25. utility, energy and transportation corridors to consider the location of prime agricultural lands when establishing alignments.

AGRICULTURE LAND USE



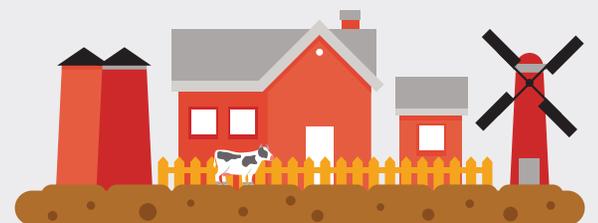
Agriculture

Agriculture continues to be the largest land user within Strathcona County.



Agri-business

Increased and diversified agricultural business is supported.



Rural Character

Agriculture is important to community character.

Ensure viability in the long term by requiring:

26. that safety and preventative mitigation measures are implemented for developments adjacent to rail lines.
27. new aggregate extraction to mitigate nuisance impacts resulting from the aggregate extraction on the adjacent agricultural lands and operations with buffering, site orientation and other techniques.
28. aggregate resource extraction operations to be carried out in accordance with an approved reclamation plan.
29. development permits for aggregate resource extraction to provide for the following:
 - a. reclamation of the site to an equivalent land capacity/capability;
 - b. conservation and storage of top soil;
 - c. designation of aggregate haul roads to reduce noise, excessive maintenance costs and dust problems; and

- d. any additional information that is required for consideration of the development permit.

Support the long term viability of the area by considering:

30. development for the generation of renewable energy where the development:
 - a. is directed to lower class soils; and
 - b. does not negatively impact adjacent land uses.



Transportation and Utilities

Ensure the prioritization of extensive agricultural operations by requiring:

31. a road network that allows for the safe and timely movement of agricultural equipment and goods.

Ensure viability in the long term by requiring:

32. all development to provide individual private on-site water and wastewater services.
33. responsible provision and maintenance of drainage corridors and infrastructure.
34. that all new parcels have access to an existing public roadway.

