

September 9, 2017

The Honorable Lana Popham  
Minister of Agriculture  
Victoria, BC

<b>MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE</b>			
Referral #	186799		
Refer to:			
Received:	SEP 14 2017		
MIN Response	<input type="checkbox"/>	Reply Direct	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
DM Response	<input type="checkbox"/>	Briefing Note	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Info/File	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
		Speaking Notes	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other			

Dear Minister Popham;

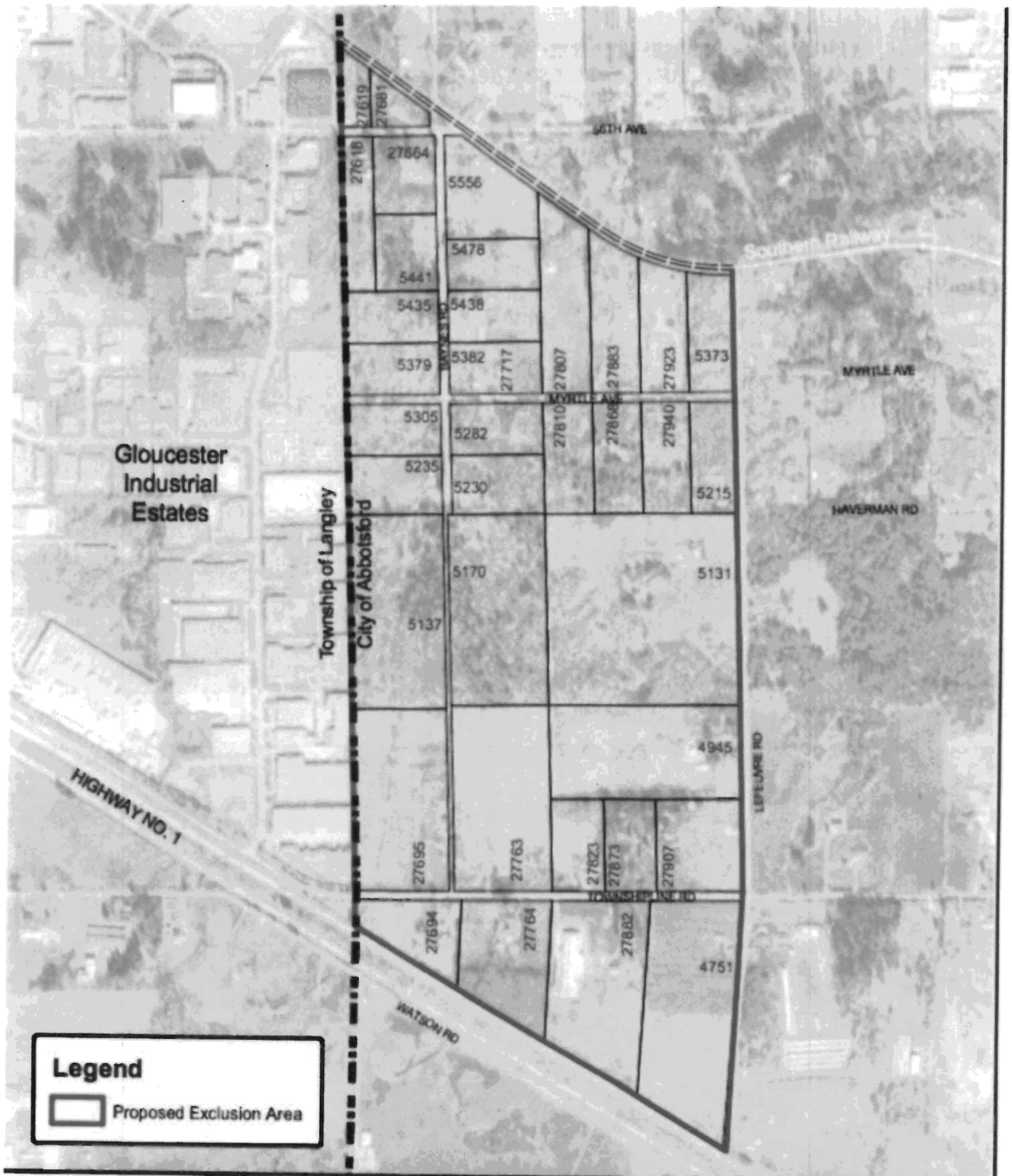
I am writing to express my concern regarding the City of Abbotsford's application to remove 355 acres of farmland in the historic community of Bradner. This land has been successfully farmed for approximately 100 years. Most of the current owners were or are still farming, but have tried to portray the land as unfarmable. As agrologist David Sahlstrom P. Ag so eloquently pointed out: ***all of the area farms outside of the red line*** (the proposed area to be removed from the ALR which I have attached as Schedule A) ***are thriving, even though they have the same type of soil.*** I would suggest that because someone chooses not to farm their land, does not make it unfarmable. Please note the pictures of farming activities I have enclosed on the very land that the owners have declared as unfarmable. **(Schedule B attached)** They were all taken within the last month.

Abbotsford has been chipping away for years at its biggest resource – its farmland. Several years ago they took out hundreds of acres on the fertile Sumas prairie for industrial use and promptly turned it into strip malls and big box stores. Now they are complaining they need more industrial land. The Bradner exclusion application was refused by the ALC when the applicant (the Emerson Real Estate Group) last applied and now the City of Abbotsford is applying on Emerson's behalf. It is my understanding he has now purchased the properties in question. The City's involvement appears to me to be in direct conflict with ***Policy G-02*** of the ALC's own procedural rules: ***"1. Elected representatives have no standing to advocate before the Commission on behalf of a constituent on any application or any other adjudicative decision making matter."*** By applying for exclusion, they are in essence acting on behalf of, and for the benefit of the Emerson Real Estate Group.

A paper written in March 1973 and found on the ALC website under ***"Library & ALC History"*** states on Page 2, last paragraph ***"Land value determined on its agricultural economic worth is comparatively low price in relation to its worth for non-farm use. Agricultural returns per acre cannot compete with quick profits that can be realized by conversion to industrial and urban purposes."***

***Farmland lends itself to low cost development; the topsoil is already present, the topography favourable and the service installation costs are low. However, most of the benefits appear to go to the developer and not the public purse."*** I believe this describes perfectly our situation in Bradner.

# SCHEDULE A



Copyright

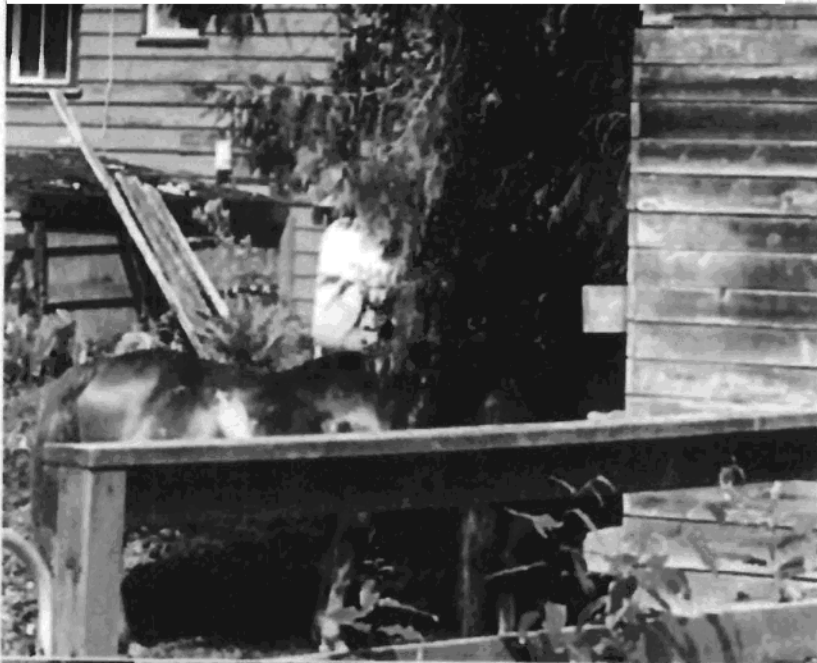
**Northridge Nurseries, 5438 Baynes St, Abbotsford, BC**



Copyright

**5235 Baynes St. Abbotsford, BC**

**Grazing land for horses**



**27695 Townshipline Rd, Abbotsford BC. Land used for grazing horses**



**27882 Townshipline Rd Abbotsford BC**  
Mushroom Farm

**&**

**4751 Lefeuvre Rd Abbotsford BC**  
Blueberry Farm

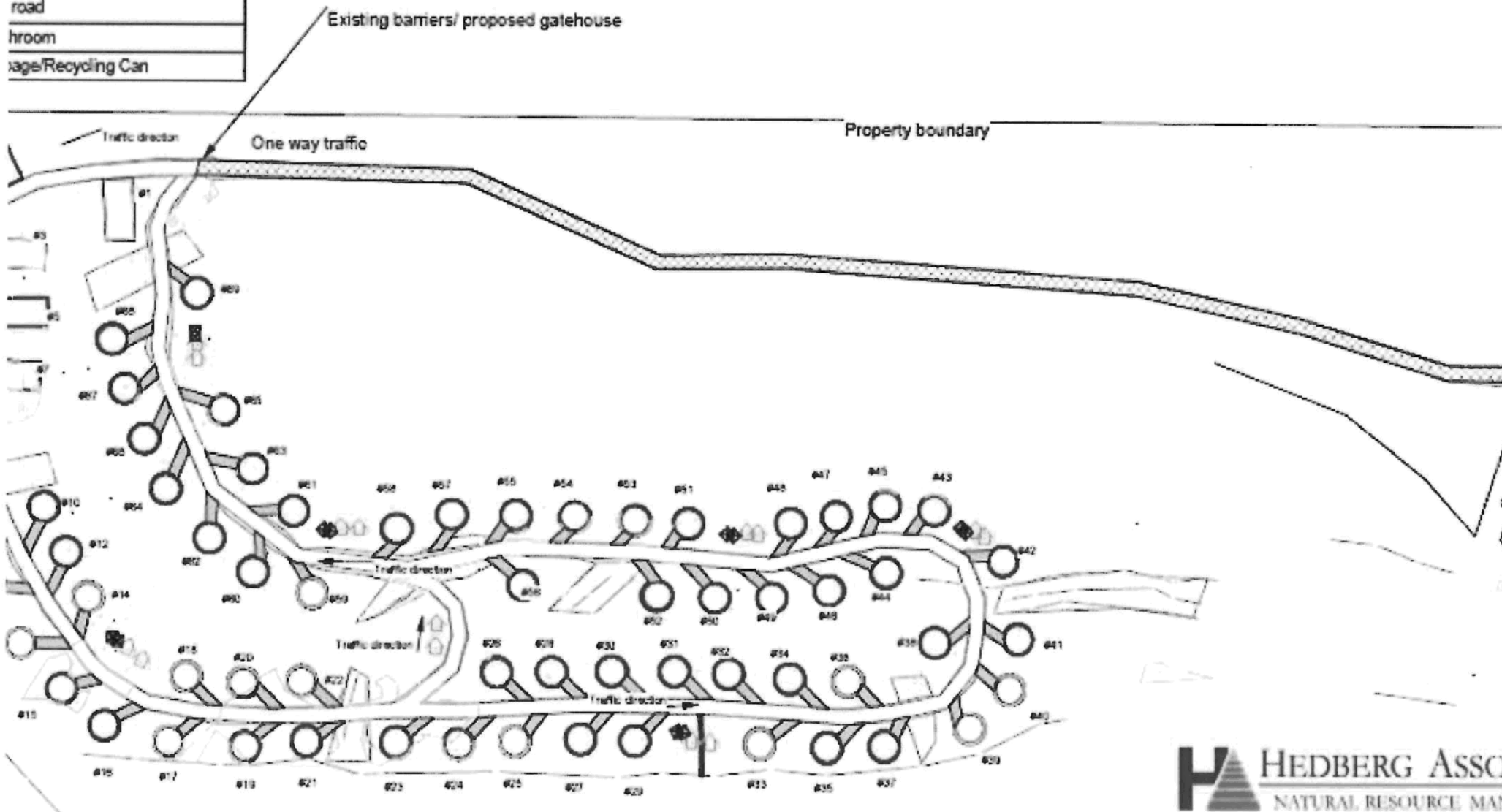
Copyright

## Legend

psites 1 - 7 = Trailer Pads  
 psites 8 - 68 = Drive in  
 psite Clearing Area  
 m Gravel Minus Surfacing  
 k/Ditchline  
 osed Campsite Fill  
 osed Campsite Out  
 osed Trail (1.5m)  
 osed Drive in paths (4m)  
 road  
 hroom  
 age/Recycling Can

## Proposed Anderson Beach Campground

Scale 1:1500







**Ministry of Agriculture  
BRIEFING NOTE FOR MINISTER FOR INFORMATION**

Ref: 186755

Date: September 13, 2017

**Issue:** Abbotsford may propose a Residential Size and Siting Bylaw that will not meet the Minister's Bylaw Standard.

**Background:** The City of Abbotsford is undergoing a comprehensive planning process called AgRefresh to review municipal agricultural policies and bylaws for land in the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR), and establish a framework for ongoing bylaw compliance. Ministry staff have attended several roundtable sessions with City staff and the consultants hired to guide the process. Ministry staff also attended a public engagement session with agricultural stakeholders in the City. A draft bylaw is expected to be presented to Council in October 2017. Any zoning bylaw amendments affecting agriculture in the ALR that result from this review will require approval from the Minister of Agriculture following third reading. Therefore, Ministry staff have been proactive in engaging with City of Abbotsford staff to ensure input into the process and to try to ensure that the bylaw amendments are consistent with Minister's Bylaw Standards prior to going to Council. A bylaw affecting the size and siting of residential uses in the ALR is expected to be a part of the bylaw amendment package.

**First Nation Consideration:** n/a

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**ADVICE TO MINISTER**



**Ministry of Agriculture**  
**BRIEFING NOTE FOR MINISTER FOR INFORMATION**

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The Ministry has been working proactively with Abbotsford throughout the phases of their AgRefresh, and they are generally supportive of the direction that they are taking to promote and support agriculture in the community. Ministry staff have an upcoming meeting with Abbotsford staff in early October to discuss how the policy in Phase 2 of the plan is translating into the development of bylaws.

**Conclusion/Next Steps:**

- There are many local governments passing residential size and siting bylaws not consistent with the Minister's Bylaw Standard.
- Staff will provide an update following the meeting in early October regarding the direction Abbotsford is taking with respect to their housing bylaw.

Attachment: Appendix A, summary of lower mainland house size bylaws

Contact: Alison Fox, Land Use Agrologist, 604-556-3106

DIR/MGR   SB   ED   SB   ADM   \_\_\_\_\_   DM   \_\_\_\_\_

**ADVICE TO MINISTER**

**Ministry of Agriculture**  
**BRIEFING NOTE FOR MINISTER FOR INFORMATION**

APPENDIX A: Summary of lower mainland house size bylaws

Local Government	Farm Residential Footprint Bylaw	House Size Restriction	Farm Residential Footprint Provisions	Maximum House Size	Notes
City of Port Coquitlam	Yes	Yes	10% of lot area up to a maximum of 2000m <sup>2</sup>	500m <sup>2</sup>	s.13
City of Surrey	Yes	No (under consideration)	maximum of 2000m <sup>2</sup> ; maximum depth 60m	N/A	
Corporation of Delta	Yes	Yes, but house size limit variable with lot size	3600m <sup>2</sup> for one farm house 5000m <sup>2</sup> for one farm house and one additional farm house Additional 1400m <sup>2</sup> for TFWH except for on greenhouse, mushroom, vegetable/berry operations with on-farm processing which are allowed up to 4300m <sup>2</sup>	Lots < 8ha 330m <sup>2</sup> Lots > 8ha 465m <sup>2</sup>	
City of Maple Ridge	Yes	Yes	0.2ha max; 60 m max depth; 50 m max rear of house	650 m <sup>2</sup> (7000 sq. ft)	
Township of Langley	No	No	N/A	N/A	

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City of Chilliwack	Yes	No	4000m <sup>2</sup> maximum farm residential footprint; 80 m maximum depth; option to locate house at rear of property with a 60 m maximum depth from rear lot line.	N/A	s.13
District of Kent	Yes	Yes	2023m <sup>2</sup> maximum farm residential footprint Additional 506 m <sup>2</sup> allowed to accommodate home occupation and/or farm employee residence.	Lots < 8ha 372m <sup>2</sup> Lots > 8ha 465m <sup>2</sup>	
Squamish-Lillooet RD - Area D (Squamish Valley)	Yes	Yes	maximum of 2000m <sup>2</sup> with an additional 500m <sup>2</sup> allowed to accommodate a farm employee residence or TFWH; maximum depth 85m.	maximum building area for principal residence 250m <sup>2</sup> ; maximum building area farm employee residence 180m <sup>2</sup> .	
City of Richmond	Yes	Yes	Lots < 2ha 50% of lot area Lots 0.2 - 1 ha 1000m <sup>2</sup> Lots > 1 ha 10% of lot area up to a maximum of 2000m <sup>2</sup> 50m maximum building setback and maximum depth of footprint 75m	Lots < 0.2 ha 500m <sup>2</sup> Lots > 0.2 ha 1000m <sup>2</sup>	
City of Port Coquitlam	Yes	Yes	10% of lot area up to a maximum of 2000m <sup>2</sup>	500m <sup>2</sup>	
City of Surrey	Yes	No (under consideration)	maximum of 2000m <sup>2</sup> ; maximum depth 60m	N/A	

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Squamish-Lillooet RD - Area C (Pemberton Valley)	No	No	N/A	N/A
Squamish-Lillooet RD - Area D (Squamish Valley)	Yes	Yes	maximum of 2000m2 with an additional 500m2 allowed to accommodate a farm employee residence or TFWH; maximum depth 85m.	maximum building area for principal residence 250m2; maximum building area farm employee residence 180m2.
City of Burnaby	No	No	N/A	N/A

**ADVICE TO MINISTER**

**From:** [Easton, Joan E AGRI:EX](#)  
**To:** [Shoemaker, Wes AGRI:EX](#)  
**Cc:** [Basi, Selena AGRI:EX](#); [Lalani, Arif AGRI:EX](#); [Fair, Susan P AGRI:EX](#); [Wong, Jane T AGRI:EX](#); [Scott, Melissa AGRI:EX](#); [Paxton, Cassidy AGRI:EX](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Abbotsford tomorrow  
**Date:** Monday, November 20, 2017 4:08:06 PM

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Hi Wes,

For the meeting with Abbotsford CEO , there will likely be discussion on the following topics:

**1. Ag-Refresh - we've been advised that the Ag-Refresh process they are undergoing, with housing bylaws as a central piece will be the focus of the conversation.**

A briefing note is now with Cassidy on this topic for you for tomorrow. Here is the summary:

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**2. Potential to discuss de-regulation**

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**3. Industrial Land**

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#### 4. Breweries:

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Here are the ministry's key messages on the recent brewery changes:

- *The Minister has been clear since her appointment in July that there needed to be a level playing field for B.C.'s alcohol producing sectors in the ALR. That has now happened.*
- *For the last two years we heard from small businesses, local governments and craft brewers and distillers that this regulation was unfair and needed to change.*
- *Under the new regulations, all alcohol producers in the Agricultural Land Reserve will operate under the same rules.*
- *All alcohol producers are now able to operate within the ALR providing they source at least 50% of the primary farm product used in their alcohol (e.g. grapes for wine, barley for beer, honey for mead) from their own and other B.C. farms (Under the previous regulation breweries, meaderies and distilleries were required to have that 50% produced at the same location as the production facility, while wineries and cideries could source it from anywhere in B.C.).*
- *Alcohol producers wishing to operate on the ALR without meeting this threshold can still apply to the Agricultural Land Commission who will assess the proposal on a case-by-case basis.*
- *The new regulation encourages the use of BC crops, and could create demand for more B.C. barley, honey, and grains.*
- *Small businesses are the heart and soul of our province and I have heard directly from the owners of breweries, distilleries and meaderies looking to have parity with their colleagues in the sector.*
- *Local governments, the B.C. Chamber of Commerce and industry all recognized and advocated that these changes were needed to make things fair and equitable, and to support opportunities for economic growth in our province's agricultural sector.*

Regards

Joan

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**From:** Easton, Joan E AGRI:EX  
**Sent:** Monday, November 20, 2017 2:55 PM  
**To:** Shoemaker, Wes AGRI:EX



**Cc:** Basi, Selena AGRI:EX; Lalani, Arif AGRI:EX; Fair, Susan P AGRI:EX; Wong, Jane T AGRI:EX  
**Subject:** Abbotsford tomorrow

Hi Wes

Selena may have already replied but bullets and the BN will be with you end of day.

Regards

Joan

Sent from my BlackBerry 10 smartphone on the TELUS network.