

WELCOME

Farming First Strategy (Agricultural Viability Strategy Update) Open House

Council has directed staff to update the 2003 Agricultural Viability Strategy (AVS) to ensure that it remains effective, and responds well to the current and future issues, trends and challenges facing the agricultural industry.

The proposed Farming First Strategy includes objectives, policies and actions to guide decisions on the land use management of agricultural land, enhance public awareness of agriculture and food security issues, and strengthen agricultural viability in Richmond. The proposed Farming First Strategy will be focused around the following five major themes:

- THEME 1:** Agricultural Land Base
- THEME 2:** Agricultural Economic Viability
- THEME 3:** Infrastructure for Agriculture
- THEME 4:** Agriculture and the Environment
- THEME 5:** Inter-Governmental Support for Agriculture

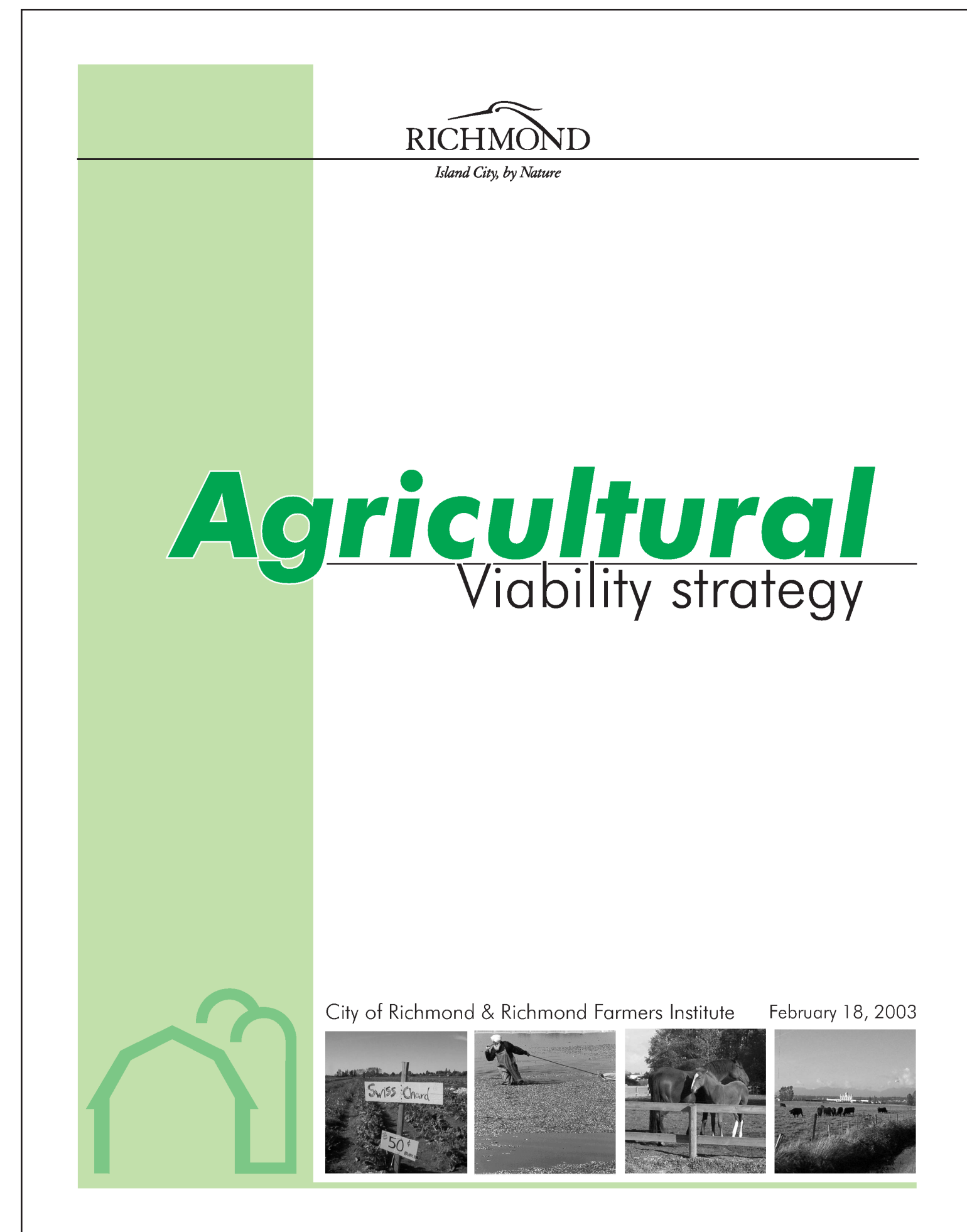
Draft objectives and policies for each theme in the Farming First Strategy are presented for your feedback. The themes, objectives and policies may be further refined as part of the consultation process prior to being presented to Council.



Richmond's Agricultural Viability Strategy (AVS) was adopted by Council on May 26, 2003 and provides a vision, objectives, principles, policies and information, to strengthen and enhance agricultural viability in Richmond, categorized based on the following strategies:

- Agricultural Decision Making Strategy;
- Services and Infrastructure Strategy;
- City Policies and Bylaws Strategy;
- Non-Farm Uses and Parks and Recreation Strategy;
- Agricultural Edge Strategy;
- Strategy for Agriculture with respect to the Environment and Environmentally Sensitive Areas;
- Public Education and Awareness Strategy; and
- Economic Growth and Diversification Strategy.

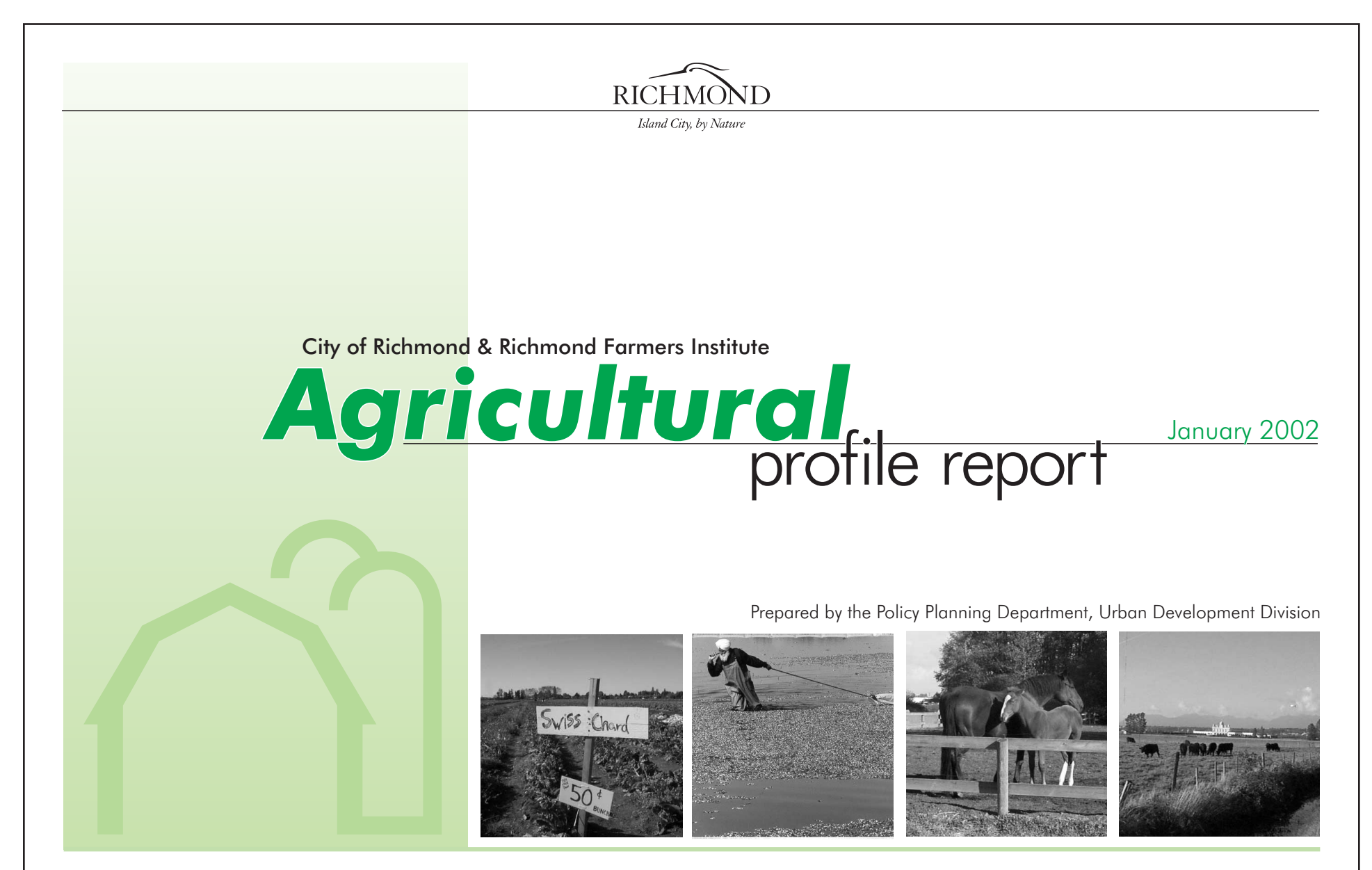
The 2003 AVS has guided decisions regarding development proposals where there may be an impact to agriculture and led to significant City infrastructure (i.e. drainage) and regulatory improvements for agricultural areas. The AVS has also been effective in creating enhanced public awareness of agricultural viability and food security issues in the city.



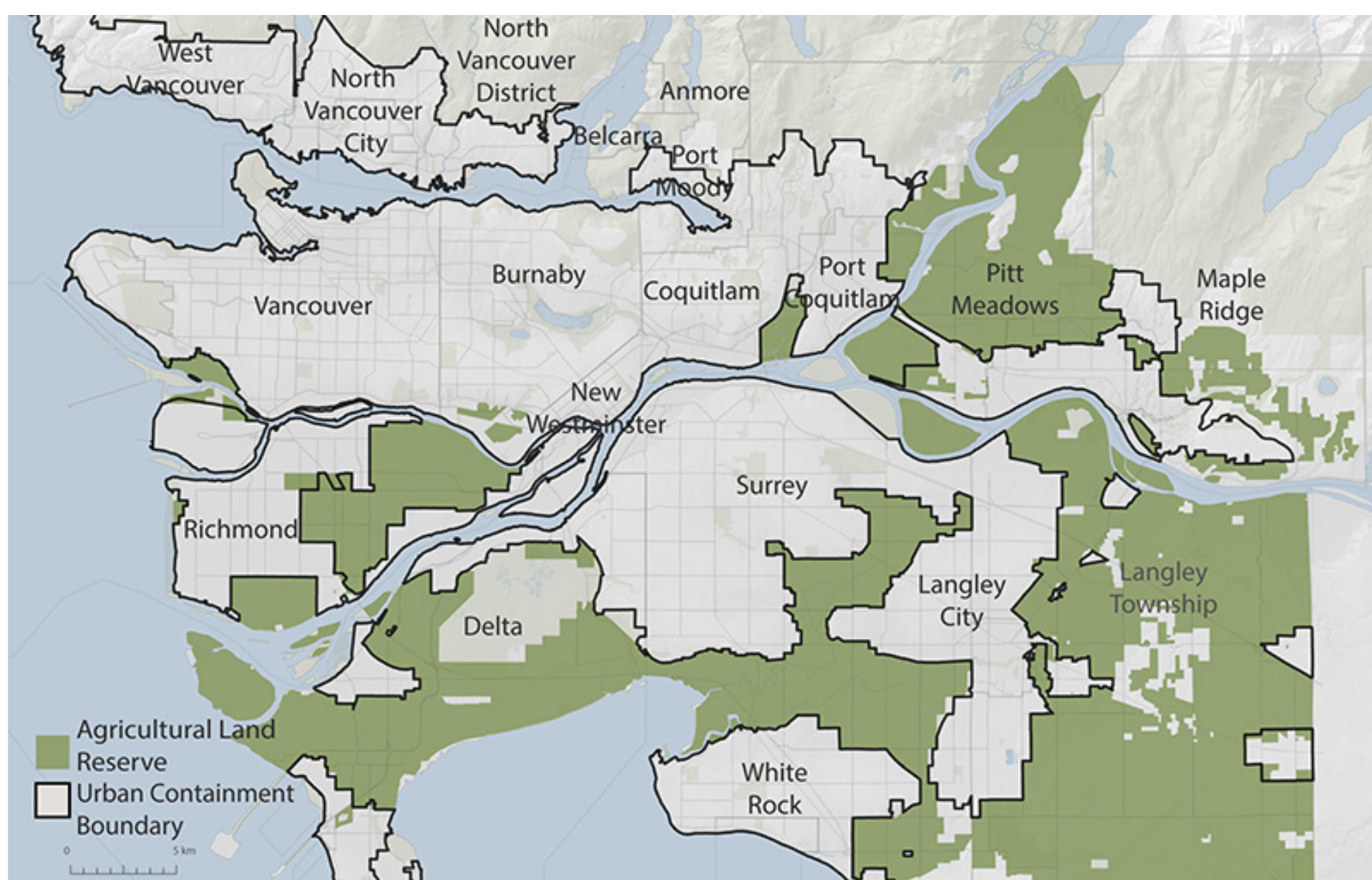
The 2003 Agricultural Viability Strategy (AVS) included over 60 recommendations designed to:

- foster and maintain agricultural viability;
- address the key issues facing the agricultural sector in Richmond; and
- work within the framework of a 2021 vision and guiding principles for the future of agriculture in the City.

Council has directed staff to update the 2003 AVS to ensure that it remains effective, and responds well to the current and future issues, trends and challenges facing the agricultural industry.



The *Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR)* is a provincially protected area in which agriculture is recognized as the priority use. Agriculture and farming uses are permitted in the ALR along with a number of other compatible activities. Non-agricultural uses and subdivisions in the ALR are restricted unless approved by the City and the *Agricultural Land Commission (ALC)*.



ALR in Metro Vancouver

Provincial Regulations

The *Agricultural Land Commission Act (ALCA)* sets the legislative framework for the establishment and administration of the ALR. The *ALR General Regulation* is the framework to implement the ALCA. The *ALR Use Regulation* specifies land uses permitted in the ALR including, but not limited to:

- **Farming and ranching activities:** including raising livestock, livestock grazing, poultry production, dairy operations, apiculture, agroforestry, grapes, mushrooms, berries, tree fruits, vegetables, nuts, grains and oilseeds, forage crops, ornamentals and green housing.
- **Restricted, but permitted farm uses:** including wineries and cideries, storage, packing and processing of farm products, equestrian facilities, farm retail sales, and temporary or seasonal agri-tourism activities.

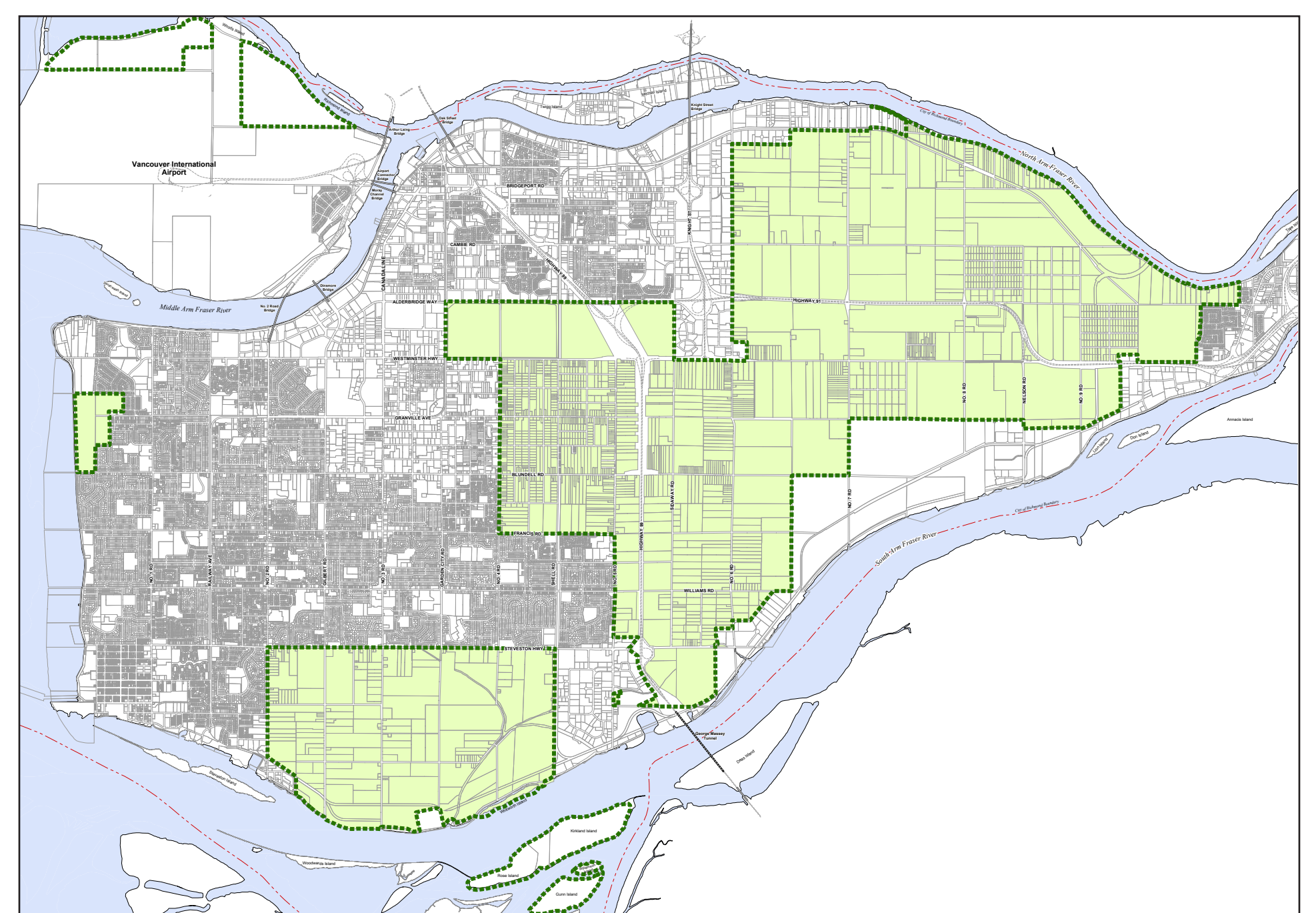
It is important for landowners to know what activities may or may not be permitted within the ALR and local zoning regulations. In addition, the procedures established by the Regulation for applications to the ALC. Non-compliance to the ALCA and associated regulations is enforced by the ALC's Compliance & Enforcement officers.

Agricultural Land Commission

The purposes of the *Agricultural Land Commission (ALC)* as set out in Section 6 of the ALCA are:

- to preserve agricultural land;
- to encourage farming in collaboration with other communities of interest; and
- to encourage local governments to enable and accommodate farm use of agricultural land and uses compatible with agriculture in their plans, bylaws and policies.

The ALC is an independent administrative tribunal comprised of appointed Commissioners (and staff) that are responsible for administering the ALCA. ALC staff conduct other activities such as policy development, local government land use planning and bylaw reviews, regulation interpretation and compliance and enforcement activities.



ALR in Richmond



Agriculture is an important part of Richmond's history. Early settlers were attracted to Richmond by the fertile soils of Lulu and Sea Islands and promise of agricultural productivity. Over the years, Richmond has grown and evolved into a vibrant urban centre. Despite the dramatic changes, a significant portion of Richmond's local area remains agricultural. Today, agriculture forms an important part of the local and regional economy as well as a major land use in the city.

Agricultural Land Base

Approximately 4,993 ha (12,338 ac) of Richmond's land base, or 39% of the City, is within the *Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR)*. The total amount of area within the ALR and area zoned Agriculture outside of the ALR is approximately 5,563 ha (13,746 ac). These figures do not include ALR boundaries on Sea Island. The amount of land in the ALR has remained relatively stable in the last 30 years.

Much of Richmond's soils are organic, formed by fluvial (river) deposits of the Fraser River. Drainage is a major issue in Richmond, where the groundwater table is high. However, with improvements (mainly drainage), all of Richmond's ALR is considered to be prime agricultural land.



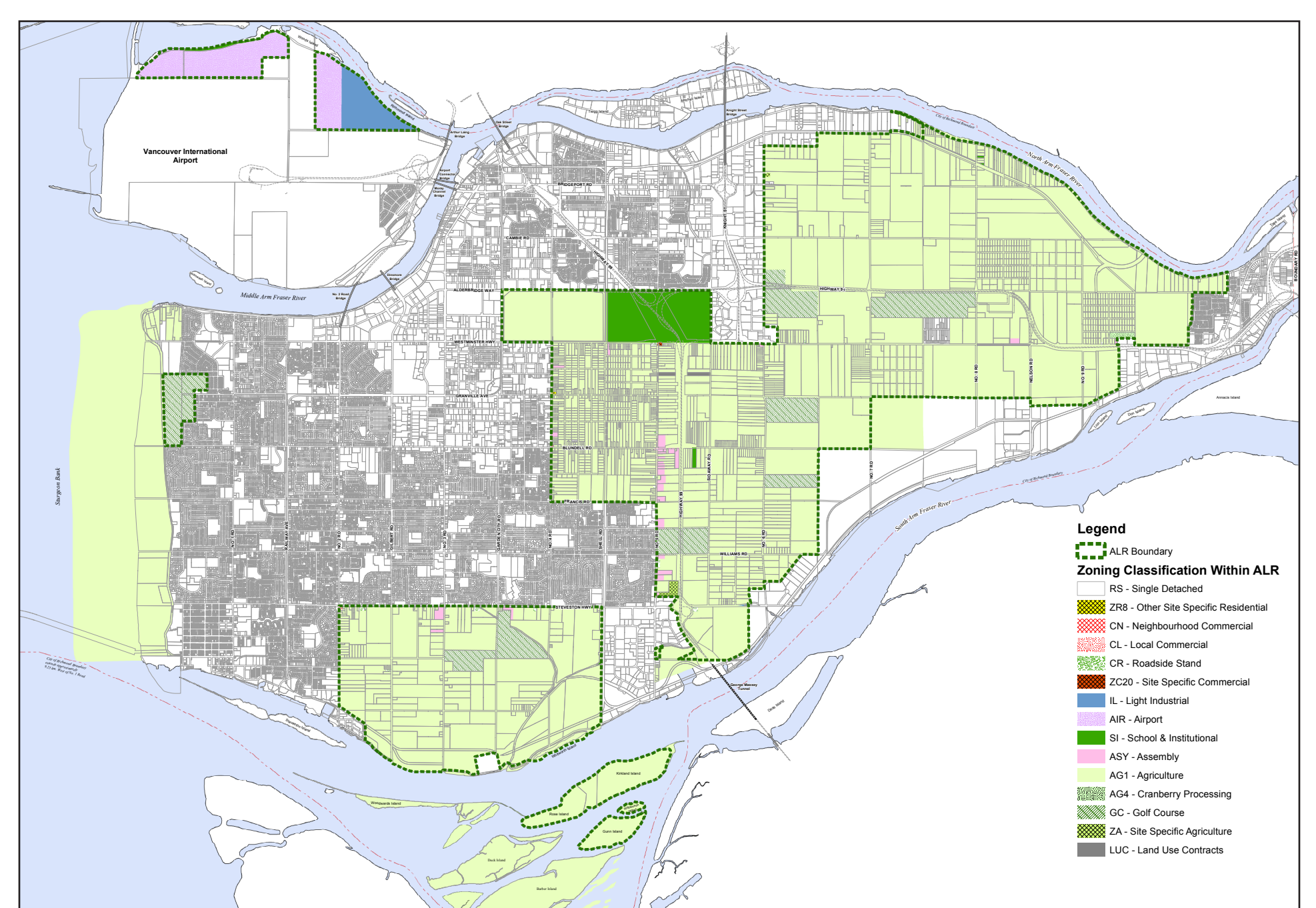
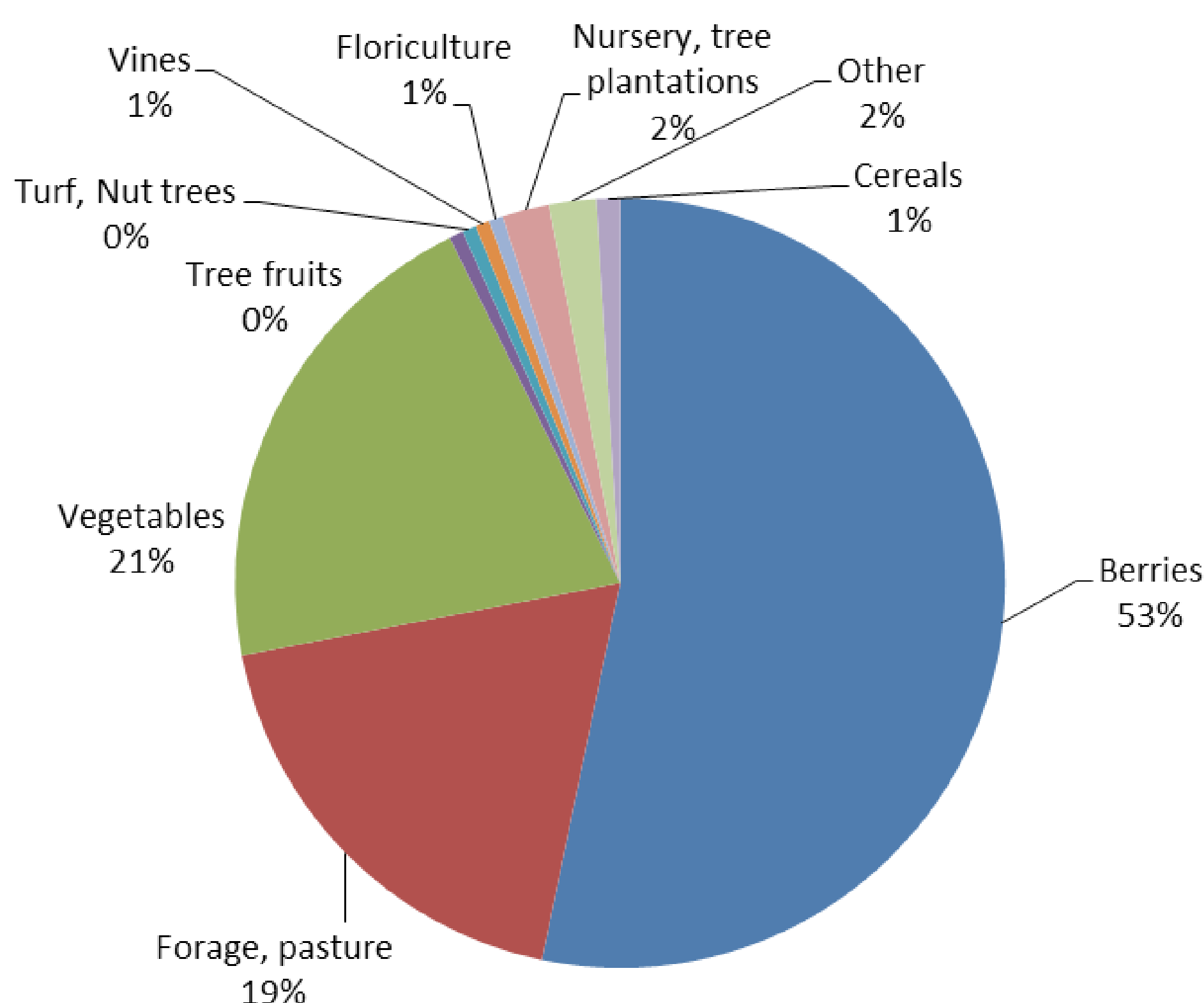
Farms & Farmers

Approximately 3,122 ha (7,714 ac) of Richmond is farmed by 189 farms (2016 Census). The average size of a Richmond farm is 16.5 ha (41 ac). The remaining lands in the ALR are either vacant or occupied by non-farm uses (including roads, institutional uses, golf courses, etc.).

Cranberries are the most dominant crop in Richmond, with 807 ha (1,995 ac) in production, accounting for 35.8% of the crop total. In 2016, Richmond accounted for approximately 31% of BC's cranberry acreage. Blueberries are also a significant crop in Richmond, with 577 ha (1,426 ac) in production, accounting for 25.6% of the crop total.

The 189 farms that reported in the 2016 Census of Agriculture recorded gross total farm receipts of \$57.8 million, with an average of \$305,820 per farm. This is an increase from \$48.6 million of gross farm receipts reported by 211 farms in 2011, \$40.5 million of gross farm receipts reported by 172 farms in 2006, and \$37.6 million of gross farm receipts reported by 182 farms in 2001.

Main field crop types by %



Zoning in the ALR